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HARRY OSBORNE

“STEP OUT—JACK!”



A COMEDY IN THREE ACTS

WALTER H. BAKER COMPANY, BOSTON

“STEP OUT—JACK!”

"Step Out—Jack!"

A Three Act Comedy

By

HARRY OSBORNE

*Author of "When Smith Stepped Out," "The
Deacon Entangled," "Peter," "Curl Papers,"
"The First Grave Digger," "Whipsawed,"
"How to Stage a Play," etc., etc.*



WALTER H. BAKER COMPANY

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“Step Out—Jack!”

CHARACTERS AND CHARACTERISTICS

JACK RYSDALE, *Age twenty-four, medium height, slender, good looking, retiring disposition but pleasing manner and personality.*

RUSSELL WATSON WILDER, *Age forty-two, a Get-rich-quick-man, tall, well-built, with a ready smile and a genial, easy, confident manner.*

PERCY LYONS, *Age thirty-five, somewhat effeminate and supercilious in speech and manner.*

MR. SEAMONS, *Age forty-five, ordinary type of city business man, excitable and blunt.*

JOHN GALLOWAY, *Age fifty, growing stout, slightly gray. A successful business man about ready to retire.*

CLARENCE GALLOWAY, *His son, age twenty-one, slender, boyish, eager to please.*

COLLINS, *Age forty-seven, a big, burly, gruff policeman who has graduated into a Deputy Sheriff.*

HARRIS, *The Butler, age fifty-five, smooth shaven, gray hair, concise and quiet in speech and manner.*

BUDDIE, *The office boy, age fourteen, but looks and talks older. Must be short and fat or heavy set. Sophisticated.*

A PAINTER,
AN ELECTRICIAN, } *Ordinary types of working men.*
TWO TEAMSTERS, }

MRS. GALLOWAY, *Age forty-eight, becoming plump but retaining all her good looks. A gracious but somewhat erratic manner.*

ZOE GALLOWAY, *Her daughter, age twenty-three, a handsome and perfectly poised young lady, radiating sweetness and charm.*

CYNTHIA BARNETT, *Her chum, age twenty-one, small, vivacious with charming girlish manner.*

MISS ROBERTS, *Age thirty, pretty, neat and attractive. Her business training shows in her quick, decisive speech and manner.*

MISS WILLIAMS, *Age thirty-five, plain but does her best to appear attractive without much success. Self-conscious, affected. An unsuccessful man-hunter.*

SYNOPSIS

ACT I.—The private office of Russell Watson Wilder, twelfth floor Realty Building, New York City. Morning.

ACT II.—John Galloway's library, Riverside Drive. Ten days later. Evening.

ACT III.—Rysdale's office, fourteenth floor Realty Building. The following morning.

TIME.—The Present.

PLACE.—New York City.

TIME OF PLAYING.—Two hours and twenty minutes.

STORY OF THE PLAY

It seems in this world that Fortune favors wealth and success rather than modesty and virtue and, therefore, this play is of practical help and encouragement to the ambitious young man or woman striving to get a start in life.

Jack Rysdale fell in love with Zoe Galloway when he chummed with her brother Clarence in college.

Jack worked his way through college, while Zoe and Clarence came from a wealthy family. After leaving college, Jack went to New York and made a start in business, hoping to win success and the girl of his choice. He promptly failed in business and then drifted from one job to another, going a little lower each time. He grew down-hearted and discouraged. Too proud to acknowledge his failure to Zoe or his old chum, Clarence, and too independent to ask for help, he has avoided meeting them for six months. When the play opens we find him broke and ready to give up and go back to his home town in the West.

As a last resort he starts selling books and wanders into the office of Mr. Wilder, a successful but unscrupulous stock promoter, who gives him an entirely new philosophy and view-point of life. Wilder only takes a passing interest in Jack until he discovers that he is acquainted with the Galloway family. Rich men are Wilder's prey, and in order to gain an introduction to Galloway, he stakes Jack to five hundred dollars. Jack is to spend the money on himself so that he will appear prosperous and successful when he again meets the Galloway family and introduces Wilder. At the same time, Jack learns that he has a rival in Lyons, who is making desperate love to Zoe.

A few hundred dollars and Wilder's rough philosophy work a wondrous change in Jack. Zoe's interest in him is renewed, he gets wind of a big business deal in which Zoe's father and Lyons are involved and the race is on. Wilder is trying to sell Galloway his wildcat stock; Lyons is trying to close his deal with Galloway and win his daughter besides; Jack, with only his nerve and his love for Zoe, steps out, takes the middle of the road and, with the odds all against him, gets a new start in business and wins Zoe's respect and love.

DRESS AND COSTUMES

JACK RYSDALE. In First Act, shabby business suit in need of pressing, shoes worn off at the heels and need polishing; gray felt hat in need of blocking; black tie. Second Act, immaculate evening clothes. Third Act, neat, perfectly fitting business suit, new shoes, black and white tie.

RUSSELL WATSON WILDER. In First Act, light, well-tailored business suit. Second Act, evening clothes. Third Act, same as Act One. Small, black mustache.

PERCY LYONS. In First Act, English walking coat, striped trousers, striped tie, spats, derby hat. Second Act, evening clothes. Third Act, dark-colored business suit, fancy vest, spats, light-colored soft hat.

MR. SEAMONS. First Act, dark-colored business suit, soft hat. Third Act, same.

JOHN GALLOWAY. Second Act, evening clothes, with Tuxedo coat. Third Act, dark business suit, dark soft hat.

CLARENCE GALLOWAY. Second Act, evening dress. Tuxedo. Third Act, business suit.

COLLINS. Third Act, full uniform.

HARRIS. Second Act, evening clothes, with black and white striped vest.

BUDDIE. First and Third Acts, brown corduroy suit.

PAINTER, ELECTRICIAN and TEAMSTERS. Characteristic working clothes.

MRS. GALLOWAY. Second Act, dark-colored evening gown.

ZOE GALLOWAY. Second Act, light evening gown and wrap. Third Act, colored silk sweater, white silk skirt, white shoes and stockings, sports hat.

CYNTHIA BARNETT. Second Act, light evening gown and wrap. Third Act, colored silk sweater, in contrast with the one worn by Zoe, sports skirt and hat, white shoes and stockings.

MISS ROBERTS. First Act, white shirt-waist, dark blue serge skirt.

MISS WILLIAMS. Third Act, light-colored suit, white shirt-waist, wide-brimmed hat.

PROPERTY LIST

ACT I

Letter in envelope and pile of correspondence for Miss Roberts.

Cigars in humidor for Wilder.

Bank-notes for Miss Roberts.

Baseball pass-check for Wilder.

Small satchel or sample-case containing props for Rysdale.

Pad of contract blanks for Rysdale.

Cane and newspaper for Wilder.

Revolver for Seamons.

Check for Miss Roberts.

Stock certificates in drawer of Wilder's desk.

Contract blank for Buddie.

ACT II

Tray with coffee service for Harris.

Card tray with calling card for Harris.

Check for Clarence.

Shaker and cordial glass for Clarence.

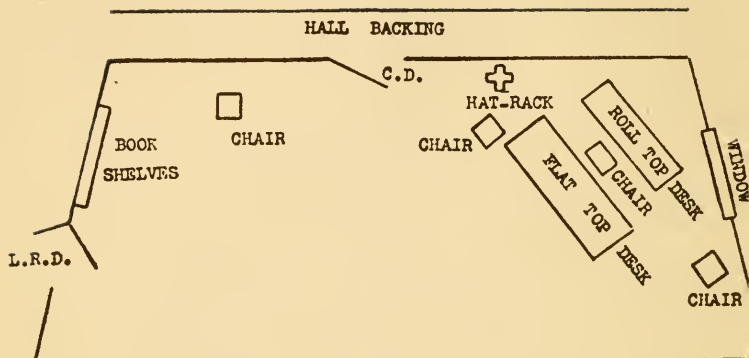
Note-book and pencil for Wilder.

Cigars for Wilder.

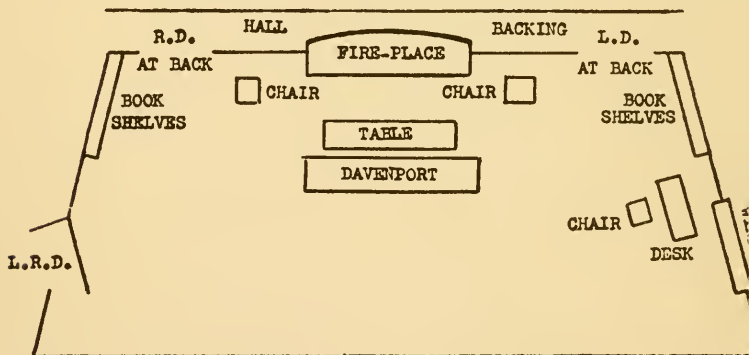
Cigarettes and matches for Clarence.
Cigarette box and matches on table.

ACT III

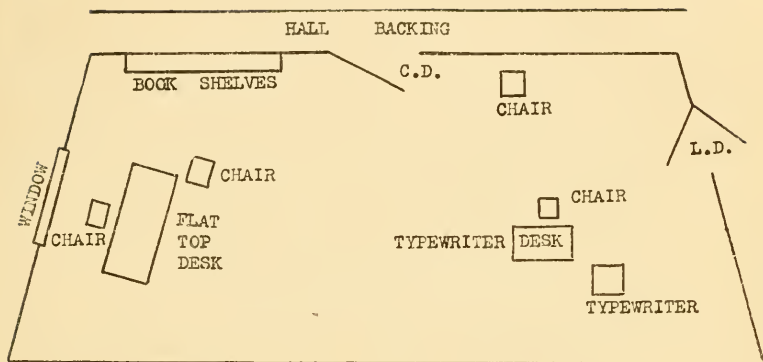
Five-cent piece for Clarence.
Four pennies for Rysdale.
A small set of Encyclopedia, about twelve or fifteen volumes, for Buddie.
Office supplies for Clarence, pens, pencils, ink-wells, spindles, stationery, etc.
Cigarettes and matches for Clarence.
Typewritten sheet of paper for Clarence.
Cigars for Galloway.
Bottle of ink for Miss Williams.
Blank check for Miss Williams.
Legal-looking document for Collins.
Hand-bag, containing powder puff, mirror and a five-cent piece for Miss Williams.



ACT I.



ACT II.



ACT III.

STAGE SETTING

Note. The set for Act III., is made by simply reversing the right and left flats of the set for Act I.

“Step Out—Jack!”

ACT I

SCENE.—*Private office of RUSSELL WATSON WILDER, Stock Promoter, twelfth floor Realty Building. There is a window at L. C. showing the walls and roofs of other buildings. A door at L. R. leads into the general office and on the ground glass panel the word “Private” shows through. Another door at C. leads into the hall, on the panel of which the words “Russell Watson Wilder, Stocks, Bonds, Lands, Private” show through. A mahogany roll-top desk is placed diagonally across the L. U. corner of the office. Directly in front of it is a flat-top desk. There is a swivel chair between the two desks. Straight chairs at both ends of flat-top desk and another one up R. Book-shelves against right wall above door, containing few books, magazines and specimens of ore. On the flat-top desk is the telephone, a small card file cabinet, ash tray, buzzer, also a strip of green plush on which are samples of ore. The roll-top desk has the usual furnishings, together with a cigar humidor. There is a hat-tree up C., just L. of C. door. The walls are adorned with a number of enlarged photographs of outdoor scenes, mining camps, farm lands, timber tracts, etc. There is a small*

framed photograph of a prize fighter over the roll-top desk. Large oriental rug covers greater part of the floor.

At the rise of the curtain MISS ROBERTS, a business-like young lady of about thirty, is seated at desk, facing front, and is just finishing the opening of the morning's mail. She has arranged the correspondence in three neat piles and is slitting the last envelope. As she reads the letter, she presses the buzzer with her left hand. BUDDIE, the office boy, enters R. door and comes up to the desk. He is about fourteen years old, illiterate, sophisticated, wearing an habitual frown and completely absorbed in his own affairs. MISS ROBERTS places the letter she is reading onto the middle pile and hands the pile to BUDDIE.

MISS ROBERTS.

Put these on my desk. [BUDDIE accepts them mechanically without looking up and MISS ROBERTS then hands him the pile at L.] Hand these to Miss Smith. [BUDDIE turns and starts R. MISS ROBERTS, sharply.] Don't get them mixed.

BUDDIE.

[Turning at R. door.] Say, Miss Roberts.

[MISS ROBERTS is transferring the remaining pile of letters to the roll-top desk and has her back to him.]

MISS ROBERTS.

Yes, Buddie.

BUDDIE.

[Confidentially.] Is Mr. Wilder going to be down?

MISS ROBERTS.

[*Putting a paper-weight on letters.*] I think so; why?

BUDDIE.

[*Disappointed.*] You told dem guys glued to de bench out there you weren't sure.

MISS ROBERTS.

[*Facing him.*] They don't enjoy my confidence the way you do, Buddie.

BUDDIE.

[*Hopelessly.*] Gee, I wish de boss would lay off onct in a while.

MISS ROBERTS.

Why, what's the matter?

BUDDIE.

I want to get off dis afternoon.

MISS ROBERTS.

Surely you haven't lost any more relatives?

BUDDIE.

Naw, but honest, Miss Roberts, dere's some old pals; some old friends of mine coming to town. I ain't seen 'em for a terrible long time and dey'll be disappointed if I don't meet 'em.

MISS ROBERTS.

Where did you say you wanted to meet them?

BUDDIE.

[*Confused.*] Huh, where did I say ——

MISS ROBERTS.

Did you say you wanted to meet them at the Polo Grounds?

BUDDIE.

Aw, you're getting worse than Mr. Wilder.

MISS ROBERTS.

Be frank now, Buddie; aren't these friends of yours the New York Giants?

BUDDIE.

[*Rapidly and waxing earnest.*] Yes, they're the "Gints"; the best friends I got. I got to be there. I helps them win. They've only got to take six more games to grab the pennant. If I ain't there to pull fer them, to tell 'em when they pull a boner, they may drop a game, they might lose de pennant.

MISS ROBERTS.

I had no idea it was so serious.

BUDDIE.

If dey don't win I'm ruined.

MISS ROBERTS.

Ruined?

BUDDIE.

I got sixteen dollars up on 'em.

MISS ROBERTS.

You mean you bet sixteen dollars on them?

BUDDIE.

Sure, with de dago out in de elevator.

MISS ROBERTS.

That's a lot of money.

BUDDIE.

Don't I know it—can't you see I got to protect my interests?

[*Telephone rings—she takes it.*]

MISS ROBERTS.

I'll speak to Mr. Wilder, Buddie.

BUDDIE.

Will you, Miss Roberts? Gee, you're all right.

[*Exit BUDDIE R. door.*]

MISS ROBERTS.

[*Over telephone.*] Hello.....Yes.....Who is it, please?.....Oh yes, Mr. Seamons.....Mr. Wilder is not in just now, but I expect him in a few minutes.....Yes.....All right, I'll tell him you're coming right over.....Good-bye. [*She hangs up. Makes notation on pad and tears it off. Arranges things on desk and rises with memorandum in her hand and coming around lower end of desk, starts for R. door as WILDER enters C. door. He is a large man, tall and well built, but quick and light in all his movements. Over forty years old, small black mustache, light business suit, well tailored. Has a genial, prosperous, confidential air about him. He at once hangs his hat and stick on the hat-tree. Lays newspaper on desk.*] Good morning, Mr. Wilder.

WILDER.

Hello; lots of mail?

MISS ROBERTS.

It's getting heavier every day.

WILDER.

[*Pausing on way to desk.*] Good. Any ah—
[*Motioning toward R. door.*] patients?

MISS ROBERTS.

Three. They were here when I opened the office.

WILDER.

[*Reprovingly.*] Early worms — deserve to be caught.

MISS ROBERTS.

They all want to buy Tungsten Consolidated.

WILDER.

[*Taking cigar from humidor.*] Little fellows, eh?

MISS ROBERTS.

I suppose so.

WILDER.

[*Lighting his cigar.*] No, no, I can't bother with them. It takes just as long to extract their roll and they only make trouble. In a week they're around whining for dividends or their money back. They make one feel like a confounded robber.

MISS ROBERTS.

[*Starting to go R.*] What shall I tell them?

WILDER.

Say it's all sold—I'm out of town; anything to get rid of them.

MISS ROBERTS.

Yes, sir.

WILDER.

After this, don't even tell me about them. It's big game or nothing, from now on.

MISS ROBERTS.

Yes, sir. [*Referring to memorandum.*] Mr. Seamons just telephoned. He's coming over inside of half an hour.

WILDER.

He bought Tungsten, didn't he?

MISS ROBERTS.

Yes.

WILDER.

Never should have sold him; he's too small to be a good loser and big enough to make trouble.

MISS ROBERTS.

Will you see him?

WILDER.

Certainly. Call up Lyons and have him come right over. He's responsible for these little fellows running in here and it's up to him to stop it. [MISS ROBERTS goes to R. door. WILDER, smiling.] You might bring in the Tangle-foot.

MISS ROBERTS.

[*Turning.*] Tangle-foot?

WILDER.

You know—green and yellow—screaming eagles—about a thousand.

MISS ROBERTS.

Oh, you mean the money. [WILDER *nods and* MISS ROBERTS *exits R. door.* WILDER *sits at his desk and becomes absorbed in the mail, making a notation on each letter after reading.* MISS ROBERTS *reënters R. door in a few moments, carrying a handful of paper money which she arranges on the flat-top desk in a manner indicating that she has done it before.*] Tangle-foot!

WILDER.

They can't get away from it.

MISS ROBERTS.

How is that?

WILDER.

They see the money; they see the ore; money is made from ore; they get the connection; buy ore, make money. I turn on a strong current of talk; their feet get tangled and—sometimes—they buy stock.

[MISS ROBERTS *laughs and starts to exit R., but turns back.*

MISS ROBERTS.

Oh, Buddie wants to go to the game this afternoon; I promised to ask you.

WILDER.

[*Musing.*] I wonder how many games he's missed.

MISS ROBERTS.

He thinks his presence necessary to make them win.

WILDER.

There may be something in that. Send him in.
[MISS ROBERTS *exits* R. door. WILDER *bends over his mail and in a moment BUDDIE enters* R. door and stands at a respectful distance, waiting for WILDER to look up. WILDER, *not looking up.*] Bud, how many games have you missed this season?

BUDDIE.

[*Twisting uneasily.*] Why—I—ah—I've—ah ——

WILDER.

[*Sharply.*] Speak louder, I don't hear you.

BUDDIE.

[*Boldly.*] Seventeen innings, altogether.

WILDER.

[*Looking up.*] Is that all?

BUDDIE.

It's almost two hull games.

WILDER.

At that, you've seen a part of every game, haven't you?

BUDDIE.

[*Burning his bridges.*] Yes, sir.

WILDER.

But sometimes business interfered and you missed a few innings?

BUDDIE.

Yes, sir.

WILDER.

[*Sternly.*] What do I pay you—eighteen dollars a month?

BUDDIE.

[*Swallowing hard.*] Yes, sir.

WILDER.

What do you do with your afternoons when the Giants are on the road?

BUDDIE.

I—I work harder than ever to—to ——

WILDER.

[*Interrupting.*] To learn the score. You keep my telephone busy all afternoon so my customers who want to talk business can't get on the line. Isn't that right?

BUDDIE.

[*Recklessly.*] Aw, go on, fire me if you want to.

WILDER.

Do you think the Giants are going to win the pennant?

BUDDIE.

They only got to take six more games.

WILDER.

If I fired you now would you go to the game this afternoon?

BUDDIE.

[*Brightening up.*] Why sure.

[WILDER takes a season's pass from his vest pocket and tosses it across the desk.]

WILDER.

Take that and get out of here.

BUDDIE.

[*Taking it.*] A pass to the grand stand!

[BUDDIE *backs away too overcome for words and bumps into the book-shelves.*

WILDER.

As soon as the game is over, get to the nearest telephone and give me the score. Can you do that?

BUDDIE.

[*Huskily.*] Can I do it? Oh, Mr. Wilder!

[BUDDIE *makes a dab at his eyes and exits R. door quickly.* WILDER *looks after him a moment and then resumes his mail.* MISS ROBERTS *enters R. door.*

MISS ROBERTS.

A Mr. Rysdale to see you.

WILDER.

What's the name?

MISS ROBERTS.

Rysdale.

WILDER.

Rysdale? I don't know him.

MISS ROBERTS.

He wouldn't tell me his business.

WILDER.

Find out what he wants.

[MISS ROBERTS *exits R. door.* WILDER *looks*

through the R's in his card cabinet. MISS ROBERTS reënters R. door.

MISS ROBERTS.

He says he wants to see you on important private business.

WILDER.

You tell him I haven't any important private business.

MISS ROBERTS.

Yes, sir.

[She turns and starts to exit R.]

WILDER.

What does he look like?

MISS ROBERTS.

He's a young man. Has a rather interesting face, but is poorly dressed and carries a satchel.

WILDER.

No, I can't be bothered. *[MISS ROBERTS exits R. door. Telephone rings and WILDER answers it.]* Hello.....Yes, Lyons.....Fine.....Are you coming over? Yes, I want to see you.....I'll be here.....Good-bye. *[Again WILDER bends over his mail. Centre door opens quietly and RYSDALE steps carefully in. He starts to close the door as carefully as he opened it, but looks at WILDER, thinks he better plan a quick getaway, and opens it a little. He is twenty-four years old, slender, looks tired and worried, his shoulders droop. He wears a shabby suit of clothes much in need of pressing. His shoes need a polish and are worn off at the heels. His hair is too long and he wears a battered gray felt hat. He*

carries a cheap little satchel. His face shows breeding and refinement and he speaks well. He stands timidly waiting for WILDER to look up and ready to turn and run. WILDER at last looks up.] Well, how did you get in?

RYSDALE.

I—I walked in.

WILDER.

Where?

RYSDALE.

Through—through the door.

WILDER.

Which door?

[RYSDALE backs up a little and never taking his eyes off WILDER motions over his shoulder with his thumb.

RYSDALE.

This one.

WILDER.

Don't you know that I had the word “private” put on that door to keep fellows like you—out?

RYSDALE.

No, sir; yes, sir.

WILDER.

If you have any business here, go around and come in the other door.

RYSDALE.

Yes, sir. I tried that door but the young lady ——
Are you Mr. Wilder?

WILDER.

[*Rising.*] Is your name—ah—Rysdale?

RYSDALE.

[*Backing off.*] Yes, sir.

WILDER.

If you're not careful, young man, a coldness is going to spring up between us.

RYSDALE.

Well, you see I have a very important personal ——

WILDER.

[*Interrupting sharply.*] What's your business?

RYSDALE.

Why, I—I'm a book agent.

WILDER.

A book agent! You have your nerve.

RYSDALE.

Not very much.

WILDER.

What's that?

RYSDALE.

I mean I haven't very much nerve.

WILDER.

If you had any more, you'd be going around with a jimmy and a stick of dynamite.

RYSDALE.

I don't want to sell you any books.

WILDER.

You bet your sweet life you don't.

[*Quickly* RYSDALE takes a book agent's stretcher, showing the backs of the volumes, from his coat pocket and holding it extended, gives the following rapidly, as though reciting a lesson.

RYSDALE.

I want to *give* you this beautiful and useful encyclopedia, sixteen volumes, that's the way they'll look in your library, magnificently bound in rich venetian cloth, hand sewed throughout, containing the latest and most authentic information on all subjects, fully illustrated and endorsed by Andrew Carnegie, Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson—— I—I want to make you a *present* of it.

WILDER.

[*Amused in spite of himself.*] What for?

RYSDALE.

Because I want you to have it. You see, it's a limited edition and we want to introduce it to a few representative business men who will appreciate it.

WILDER.

Why pick on me?

RYSDALE.

The books don't cost you a cent and—I thought you might like them.

WILDER.

So you really want to *give* me these books?

RYSDALE.

[*Hopefully.*] Yes, sir.

WILDER.

All right, I'll let you.

[RYSDALE *quickly drops the stretcher and takes a pad of contract blanks from his pocket.*

RYSDALE.

Just sign your name on that dotted line.

WILDER.

[*Reading the contract.*] Two years subscription to the "Sun Rise Weekly" ——

RYSDALE.

Only five dollars, regular price seven dollars and fifty cents. We deliver the books free of charge and the magazine comes every week.

WILDER.

[*Thoughtfully.*] It's a wonder they don't get up something new.

RYSDALE.

Oh, it's a brand new encyclopedia, just off the press.

WILDER.

No, no, I just strung you along to see what you had. I'm in the selling game myself and always looking for new ideas.

RYSDALE.

But you want the books, don't you?

WILDER.

Of course not. Do you ever sell any?

RYSDALE.

I've only been at it a week and two parties told me to call again.

WILDER.

Don't do it; they'll be waiting for you with a piece of lead pipe.

RYSDALE.

[*Opening his satchel.*] If you won't take the books perhaps I can sell you one of these patent combination coat and trouser hangers. [*He holds up a nickel-plated contrivance.*] Keeps the coat in shape and the trousers pressed. Only thirty-five cents complete. [WILDER *bursts into a roar of laughter, but* RYSDALE *never cracks a smile.*] Did I say something funny?

WILDER.

You don't need to say a word to be funny. What ever made you think you could sell books and that kind of truck?

RYSDALE.

The sales agent said I could make at least five dollars a day.

WILDER.

You're lucky if you're not murdered.

RYSDALE.

What do you mean?

WILDER.

[*Sitting.*] You're not big enough for a book agent. You should weigh at least two hundred pounds.

RYSDALE.

I fail to see what weight has to do with it.

WILDER.

That's because nobody's kicked you out yet.

RYSDALE.

Just because you don't want to buy anything you needn't try to make fun of me.

WILDER.

Now don't get peevish, young fellow. You blundered in here and took up my time with your fool selling talk, but instead of firing you out as I should, I'll give you some good advice and it won't cost you anything.

RYSDALE.

[*Gloomily.*] Oh, I can get all the advice I want.

WILDER.

Can you get it from the right kind of people? Maybe you don't know who I am, so I'll tell you that I never had even a common school education. I grew up in a western mining camp, was kicked around, everybody's dog. Every lesson I ever learned was dug out of the Book of Life and look at me now. I pay two hundred and fifty dollars a month for these offices. I have a suite of rooms in the finest hotel in town. It costs me six hundred dollars a month just to live; and I'm making money,

too. Why? Because I'm successful. I've had 'em all after me. Postal authorities, special agents, private detectives, but they can't get me, and why? Because I know how to fight for my rights. Now if you think my advice isn't worth anything, sneak out as quietly as you came in.

RYSDALE.

I'm a failure at everything I ever tried. I would like to have your advice.

WILDER.

Sit down. Now in the first place, you take yourself too damned seriously. You need a little smiling enthusiasm. Whether you're driving a truck, fighting a battle, dancing around a ticker tape, or selling books, you've got to *pretend to like it*. It's easy enough to smile when you're feeling good but try to do it when you're down and out and see how hard it comes.

RYSDALE.

I simply can't.

WILDER.

You *got* to. Look serious if you want to, when things are coming your way, but smile, damn you, smile, when they're going against you. You're never whipped until someone finds it out. Keep 'm guessing. Looking confident and happy gives you confidence, it makes you win.

RYSDALE.

[*Jumping up excitedly.*] I know, we had a lesson on that in Psychology, it was called—the—the reaction of bodily function upon the mental state.

WILDER.

But you didn't learn it, did you?

RYSDALE.

I suppose not.

WILDER.

[*Pointing to framed picture of a prize-fighter over his desk.*] See that picture up there?

RYSDALE.

Looks like Kid Kelly.

WILDER.

[*Pleased.*] Sure, it is Kid Kelly, retired from the ring, the undefeated light weight champion. I sat in his corner at the last fight.

RYSDALE.

[*Interested.*] I remember, seventeen rounds.

WILDER.

In the tenth round he got a punch that nearly killed him. He was whipped then, but for one thing—that nobody knew it. He was doubled up on the floor; the referee tolled off the seconds. I saw his face for a moment and it was a sight, but on the count of nine he came up smiling, *smiling*. He stalled through the balance of the round and came back to his corner grinning, but without enough fight in him to swat a fly. Maybe we didn't work over that fellow. Six rounds before he was right again and then—well, you know, in the seventeenth he slipped over a wallop that won the fight and saved his title.

RYSDALE.

Yes, I remember.

WILDER.

But you *didn't* know he was whipped in the tenth round. Now just apply that to everyday life. Smile, don't let 'em know when you're hurt, and the world is your oyster.

RYSDALE.

They don't teach that at college.

WILDER.

College man, eh?

RYSDALE.

Yes, sir.

WILDER.

I wish I could have gone to college.

RYSDALE.

That Book of Life you spoke of is better.

WILDER.

What did you do after leaving college?

RYSDALE.

I had a little money and started in business.

WILDER.

What business?

RYSDALE.

Advertising.

WILDER.

Good business all right.

RYSDALE.

I lasted just five months. Owed a lot of money and had to quit.

WILDER.

Then what?

RYSDALE.

I tried all sorts of work but I couldn't seem to get a start. I became discouraged, I guess, and when you start to go down hill, everybody seems ready to give you a shove.

WILDER.

You bet they do. What made you take up this book-selling game?

RYSDALE.

It was the only job I could get. I've tried everything but begging and stealing. I pawned my good clothes so I could eat; that's the reason I'm wearing this misfit.

WILDER.

Got any ambition?

RYSDALE.

All I want now is enough money to get out of this town and never see it again.

WILDER.

Where're you going?

RYSDALE.

Home, out West.

WILDER.

Why did you take up advertising in the first place?

RYSDALE.

I thought it was a fine business.

WILDER.

Still feel that way?

RYSDALE.

I suppose so.

WILDER.

Do you like it better than any other business?

RYSDALE.

Yes, I studied for it at college.

WILDER.

[*Going for him.*] Then why in thunder did you quit cold in five months?

RYSDALE.

I had to. I failed.

WILDER.

Failed? Did any man ever build up a business in five months? Don't you know that out of all the men who make their first start in business, ninety-four per cent. fail? And don't you know that out of that ninety-four per cent. that fail the first time, eighty-two per cent. succeed the second time they make a start?

RYSDALE.

No, I didn't know that.

WILDER.

It's a fact, statistics prove it. Look here, you can divide the whole world into just two classes, Quitters and Stickers; now to which class do you belong?

RYSDALE.

[*Rising, hurt.*] I'm sorry now I told you anything.

WILDER.

[*Goads him.*] Oh, are you? I dare you to look yourself in the face. You come to the finest city in the world, full of hope and ambition and at the first little reverse, you get discouraged, you blame the town and want to run home. Now which are you, a Quitter or a Sticker?

RYSDALE.

[*Turns away, his face twitching.*] I—I would rather not discuss the matter.

WILDER.

[*Following him up.*] Then I'll diagnose your case for you. You've got a streak of yellow in you somewhere, you're a Quitter.

[RYSDALE, *his spirit at last aroused, whirls in a flash, up close to WILDER, his fist ready to strike.*

RYSDALE.

[*Savagely.*] Take that back, damn you.

[WILDER *regards him calmly.*

WILDER.

[*After a pause.*] All right. I'm glad to see you still got a kick left in you.

RYSDALE.

You take it back?

WILDER.

Sure, if you were a Quitter, you would have swallowed it.

RYSDALE.

[*Relaxing.*] I suppose I ought to stay and fight it out.

WILDER.

Why certainly. What chance has a fellow in his home town?

RYSDALE.

If I had a little money —

WILDER.

Money! All you need is a little back-bone. Many a man has started a *bank* on nothing but back-bone and a gold-letter sign. [MISS ROBERTS *enters R. door.*

MISS ROBERTS.

Mr. Seamons is here.

WILDER.

Have him wait a moment.

[MISS ROBERTS *exits, R. door.*

RYSDALE.

[*Holding out his hand.*] You've given me something to think about. I thank you and am glad to know you.

WILDER.

[*Thoughtfully.*] I listened to your selling talk a while ago; how would you like to listen to mine?

RYSDALE.

I would like to, of course, but ——

WILDER.

[*Interrupting.*] About a week ago this fellow Seamons out there bought some mining stock.

RYSDALE.

Seamons; is he in the printing business?

WILDER.

Yes.

RYSDALE.

It may be the same one. He did some work for me. He holds a judgment against me for four hundred and fifty dollars.

WILDER.

Well, what of it?

RYSDALE.

I would a little rather not meet him.

WILDER.

He won't eat you. You are going to pay him, aren't you?

RYSDALE.

When I can, yes.

WILDER.

Well, meet him with a smile; you never can tell, he may trust you for some more printing—give you another start in business.

RYSDALE.

No, I would rather not.

WILDER.

I'll tell you, sit over there and read the paper. [*Pointing upper R. corner.*] He won't recognize you, anyway.

[*WILDER hands RYSDALE the morning paper.*

RYSDALE.

Probably not in these clothes. Thank you.

[*RYSDALE goes up R. and sits, holding the newspaper in front of him. WILDER closes C. door, and then touches his buzzer. SEAMONS enters R. door. He is an ordinary business man, forty-five years old, excitable and demonstrative. He is impatient at having been made to wait.*

WILDER.

[*Holding out his hand.*] Good-morning, Mr. Seamons.

SEAMONS.

I don't know whether I want to shake hands with you or not.

WILDER.

[*Laughing.*] It won't cost you anything.

SEAMONS.

I shook hands with you last week and it cost me eight hundred and forty dollars.

WILDER.

Oh, you are referring to the three thousand shares of Tungsten you bought. My dear Mr. Seamons, that's the best investment you ever made; sit down.

SEAMONS.

I don't want to sit down, I want —— [*Stops suddenly as he sees RYSDALE.*] I thought we were alone.

WILDER.

We are—a client of mine—it's all right. Sit down. [*SEAMONS sits upper end of flat top desk. WILDER glances through his card cabinet.*] That stock is about gone. How many more shares do you want?

SEAMONS.

[*Jumping to his feet.*] How many more do I want? I want to get rid of what I have.

WILDER.

[*Pained.*] I thought you bought that stock as an investment, not as a speculation.

SEAMONS.

If it isn't worth anything, what's the difference?

WILDER.

Who said it wasn't worth anything?

SEAMONS.

My banker.

WILDER.

Funny thing about bankers. They're so careful of other people's money until they get it into their own hands and then—why, do you know, Mr. Seamons, my best customers are bankers, big bankers.

SEAMONS.

That doesn't concern me. I brought back those stock certificates. Your young lady just put them

in your safe; so now you have the stock, and I want my money.

WILDER.

[*Surprised.*] You want me to buy it back?

SEAMONS.

[*Standing opposite WILDER.*] That's exactly what you've got to do.

WILDER.

[*Coldly.*] I am a promoter, not a broker—I sell but I do not buy.

SEAMONS.

I don't care what you are, you've got to take it back.

WILDER.

[*Leaning back in his chair.*] I don't mind taking it back but I do not like your tone. It sounds as though you were forcing me. Now you can't force me to do anything.

SEAMONS.

[*Pointing to money on desk.*] Is that so? What is there to stop me from taking this money right here?

WILDER.

[*Never moving.*] Any man who's big enough to get out of this room with that money is welcome to it.

[*RYSDALE lowers his paper. SEAMONS clumsily pulls a revolver from his hip pocket and levels it at WILDER.*]

SEAMONS.

Pay me that money.

"STEP OUT—JACK!"

WILDER.

[*Gives a low, easy laugh. RYSDALE springs to his feet.*] What are you trying to do, scare me?

[SEAMONS *loses his nerve, and the weapon moves up and down uncertainly.*

SEAMONS.

No, no, I'm not trying to scare anybody, but ——

WILDER.

Someone might take that money away from you; would you rather have me give you a check?

SEAMONS.

I suppose it would be safer. [WILDER *presses the buzzer, takes a cigar from his humidor and offers them to SEAMONS, who takes one and slips the revolver back into his pocket. RYSDALE gets behind his newspaper again.*] Oh, thanks.

[WILDER *holds out a light. MISS ROBERTS enters R. door. SEAMONS sits at upper end of desk.*

WILDER.

Give Mr. Seamons a check for eight hundred and fifty dollars.

SEAMONS.

Forty, eight hundred and forty.

WILDER.

Is that right? Well, just as he says.

SEAMONS.

Don't you want to count the stock and see if it's all there?

WILDER.

No, no; you're not trying to get the best of me any more than I am of you. That's all right, Miss Roberts.

[MISS ROBERTS *exits R. door*. SEAMONS, *thinking it is all settled, relaxes and is off his guard*.

SEAMONS.

If you're busy, I'll wait outside.

WILDER.

Sit still. I have really made an exception in your case, as I never buy and sell even when I can make a good turn. It wouldn't do for me, you understand. But now that I have this stock, I'll see what I can get for it on the market. [*Takes telephone.*] Get Mr. Hayes, Turner Hayes and Company.

SEAMONS.

[*With awakened interest.*] Who are they, brokers?

WILDER.

Yes.

SEAMONS.

My banker said there wasn't any market for it.

WILDER.

You can't blame him; he wants to make a little money himself. You paid twenty-eight cents, didn't you?

SEAMONS.

Yes, twenty-eight.

WILDER.

A month from now you can't buy it for fifty. If you had waited a month instead of a week you could make a thousand dollars without turning your hand.

SEAMONS.

Do you really believe that?

WILDER.

[*Rising and becoming enthusiastic.*] I know it. Haven't I put my own money into it? I borrowed fifty thousand dollars on my personal note to buy this Tungsten stock. What's more I told the bank just what I was going to do with it. I'm paying two hundred and fifty dollars interest every month on that loan. That's how much confidence I have in it.

SEAMONS.

Why didn't you tell me that before?

WILDER.

That's my own private business. I'm taking you into my confidence. In the old days, Seamons, luck was the big factor in striking it rich. Prospectors found a little ore on the surface of the ground and guessed there was more underneath. Fortunes were lost, lives were lost in the mad gamble, but now that's all changed. Instead of a greenhorn with a pick and shovel, we have highly trained locators scour the country. Expert geologists follow them up and investigate scientifically their findings. It's all on a scientific basis. We never sink a shaft until we *know* what's there. If we don't know, we don't sink it. There's an enormous demand for Tungsten: it far

exceeds the supply. It is going to make as many millionaires as gold, copper and oil. It's going to make every shrewd investor rich—independent for life. You know the bankers and capitalists have built a stone wall around the secret of making money. You can't blame them either. They've made us believe that five or six per cent. is all money is worth, is all money can earn, but we've broken through that wall, we've learned the secret of the earning power of money. How did the millionaires of this country make their money? Did they pile it up dollar after dollar at six per cent.? We thought so once but now we know better. They did precisely as we are doing, dug it out of the ground. Tungsten is to-day the greatest undeveloped commercial product in the world. There it is in the incandescent lamps, in the steel structure of this building, in the miles of railroads, in every place where steel is used. When the rush is on and Tungsten is being traded at five, ten, fifteen dollars a share, you'll look back and wonder if you were crazy or somebody robbed you. I tell you this is the same kind of opportunity that came to Rockefeller, Morgan, Carnegie, Frick and Copper King Clark—the opportunity of a lifetime——
[The telephone rings and WILDER takes it. Resuming his quiet business-like tone.] Hello.....Mr. Hayes.....Wilder.....fine, thank you.....how's Tungsten this morning?.....Thirty-five bid.....thirty-six asked.....Yes, they're getting on to it slowly.....sell three thousand at the market——

[SEAMONS, who has been listening intently, jumps to his feet.]

SEAMONS.

Wait, hold on there.

WILDER.

Just a moment, Hayes. [*To SEAMONS.*] Did you speak to me?

SEAMONS.

Tell him it's all off. I don't want to sell.

WILDER.

Hayes.....just hold that order until you hear from me further.....yes. Good-bye.

[*WILDER puts down the instrument and looks at SEAMONS inquiringly.*]

SEAMONS.

I never did intend to sell that stock. I just wanted to sound you out before buying some more.

WILDER.

[*Flattering him.*] You play a clever game, Mr. Seamons—fooled me all right.

SEAMONS.

I can still buy at twenty-eight?

WILDER.

How many?

SEAMONS.

Another thousand.

WILDER.

Twenty-eight is the syndicate price; you'll have to hold it for thirty days before putting it on the market.

SEAMONS.

That's all right, I understand.

WILDER.

[*Considering.*] Well — [*Enter MISS ROBERTS, R. door, with check for WILDER to sign.*] All right, but this will be the last. [*To MISS ROBERTS as he takes the check.*] Give Mr. Seamons a thousand shares of Tungsten at twenty-eight.

MISS ROBERTS.

Yes, sir.

SEAMONS.

I'll give you a check right now.

WILDER.

Miss Roberts will fix you up, just hand it to her. [*MISS ROBERTS exits, R. door. WILDER grasps SEAMONS' hand.*] I congratulate you upon your business judgment. Good-bye, and come in again.

SEAMONS.

I'm much obliged to you. I hope you'll pardon me for pointing that revolver at you.

WILDER.

That's nothing. You were only joking.

SEAMONS.

That's all. Good-bye, Mr. Wilder.

WILDER.

Good-bye; good luck.

[*SEAMONS exits, R. door, getting his check-book out of his pocket. RYSDALE drops his paper. WILDER crumples up the check MISS ROBERTS handed him and tosses it in the waste basket.*]

RYSDALE.

[*In admiration.*] No wonder you make money.
[*WILDER laughs softly.*] Weren't you frightened when he pointed that gun at you?

WILDER.

I've looked into a lot of those things. They never go off after they're pointed.

RYSDALE.

I believe you could talk a man into anything.

WILDER.

You can. If they don't wear ear muffs.

RYSDALE.

Is that stock worth anything?

WILDER.

[*Righteously.*] Worth anything? I should say it is. [*Quickly he takes a stock certificate from a drawer of his desk.*] Look at it! Isn't it beautiful? Did you ever see a finer piece of engraving? My own design; they cost five and a half cents apiece and I get them in hundred thousand lots.

RYSDALE.

How about the property?

WILDER.

Oh, the property. Well, if we find what we expect, the stock will be cheap at five dollars a share; if we don't, it will be dear at a penny.

RYSDALE.

In other words, it's only a gamble?

WILDER.

Pure and simple.

RYSDALE.

Don't you realize you are making a gambler out of Mr. Seamons?

WILDER.

Not I. You had him before I did. Didn't he gamble on your paying him for some printing?

RYSDALE.

I—I intended to pay him.

WILDER.

I intend to make him rich.

[Enter BUDDIE, R. door.]

BUDDIE.

Mr. Lyons wants to see you.

WILDER.

Send him in.

[BUDDIE exits, R. door.]

RYSDALE.

[Holding out his hand.] Good-bye, Mr. Wilder, and thank you for your advice.

WILDER.

Come in again when I have more time; maybe I can help you get into something.

RYSDALE.

Thank you, that's very kind of you. [As RYSDALE reaches R. door, he meets LYONS, who enters there. LYONS is about thirty-five, well dressed, but somewhat effeminate and supercilious in his manner.]

RYSDALE recognizes him at once, and is about to speak and checks himself. LYONS notices this and stops.]
How are you, Mr. Lyons?

LYONS.

Oh, good morning. Your face is familiar, but —

RYSDALE.

My name is Rysdale.

LYONS.

[*Looking him up and down.*] Rysdale? Oh, yes, yes, yes. How are you? We met at Miss Galloway's, I believe.

[*At the mention of the name GALLOWAY, WILDER pays strict attention.*]

RYSDALE.

Yes.

LYONS.

Quite some time ago, wasn't it?

RYSDALE.

Yes, it was. I was just going; glad to have seen you again. Good-bye, Mr. Wilder.

WILDER.

[*Quickly.*] Oh, Rysdale, wait outside a moment, I want to see you again before you go.

RYSDALE.

All right.

[*Exit RYSDALE, R. door.*]

LYONS.

How are you, Mr. Wilder?

WILDER.

Fine, thanks, sit down.

LYONS.

How's business?

WILDER.

I'm getting enough business, but not the right kind of business.

LYONS.

How is that?

WILDER.

Every day my outer office is cluttered with a lot of little two by four want-to-get-rich-quick-investors and flocks of widows and orphans.

LYONS.

Isn't their money as good as anyone's else?

WILDER.

Not for me it isn't. If I've got to make my money off that class of clients, I'm going to get a job with a pick. When I gave you my advertising contract, you said you could bring me in touch with the big fellows. If you can't do it and do it quick, I'll have to cancel my contract.

LYONS.

I can do it if anybody can.

WILDER.

Then get busy. Change your copy, change your mediums. I don't care how you do, but do it. Why, a few days ago, I was introduced to a party with a lot of money and I sold him more stock in half an

hour than I do the widows and orphans in a month. I want to get the big fellows; if the bubble bursts they're ashamed to admit it and keep their mouths shut.

LYONS.

I can fix that all right.

WILDER.

All right, now here's another thing —— [BUDDIE enters, R. door.] What is it, Buddie?

BUDDIE.

De guy out there says he'd rather not wait no longer; he wants me to get his satchel.

WILDER.

[*Looking about.*] Satchel? Oh, yes, there it is. [BUDDIE takes the satchel and starts R. WILDER, thoughtfully.] Tell him to wait a few minutes longer, Buddie. Here, I'll tell you, ask him to give you that contract blank for me to sign.

BUDDIE.

Contract blank for you to sign?

WILDER.

Yes, he'll understand. [*Exit BUDDIE, R. door.*] A long while ago, you promised to introduce me to old John Galloway. When you going to do it?

LYONS.

As soon as a favorable opportunity presents itself.

WILDER.

You've been telling me that for six months.

LYONS.

He is a hard man to approach. My contract with him has just expired; as soon as I have him signed up again I can arrange it.

WILDER.

I'll remind you of that.

LYONS.

If you would only wait until his daughter and I are formally engaged, it would be still better.

[BUDDIE enters, R. door, with one of RYSDALE'S contract blanks.

WILDER.

[Taking it.] Is he going to wait?

BUDDIE.

Yes, sir.

WILDER.

All right, Bud. [*Exit* BUDDIE, R. door.] How long before you expect to be engaged?

LYONS.

She was abroad all summer or it would have been long before this.

WILDER.

In other words, you'll take care of me after you get yourself all fixed.

LYONS.

No, indeed. I'll see to it right away.

WILDER.

All right. Now what do you know about this young Rysdale?

LYONS.

Very little.

WILDER.

I heard you say you met him at the Galloways'.

LYONS.

Yes, he knew Miss Galloway's brother, I believe.

WILDER.

[*Thoughtfully.*] I see. I guess he's hard up, isn't he?

LYONS.

Down and out, I should say, judging from appearances. [*Rising.*] There wasn't anything else?

WILDER.

No, not to-day; don't forget about the big fellows.

LYONS.

I won't; good morning, Mr. Wilder.

WILDER.

Good-bye, Lyons. [LYONS *exits*, c. door. WILDER *presses buzzer and is signing the contract blank as BUDDIE enters*, R. door.] Have Mr. Rysdale come in.

BUDDIE.

Yes, sir.

[*Exit BUDDIE*, R. door. *He holds the door open, and RYSDALE enters, carrying his satchel.*]

WILDER.

[*Holding out the contract.*] Here's your contract.

RYSDALE.

[*Hesitating.*] You're not doing this out of pity?

WILDER.

No, and I'm not doing it because you talked me into it either. But a few books *would* improve the appearance of my office. Sit down. What's your given name?

RYSDALE.

[*Sitting.*] Jack, or John rather.

WILDER.

[*Offering the humidor.*] I like Jack better. Have a cigar, Jack.

RYSDALE.

Thanks.

[*RYSDALE sits at upper end of flat top desk and lights his cigar and offers a light to WILDER.*]

WILDER.

How well do you know John Galloway?

RYSDALE.

Of course you mean the big yeast man?

WILDER.

Yes.

RYSDALE.

I did know him quite well, before I stopped calling at his house.

WILDER.

If you don't mind, why did you stop calling?

RYSDALE.

I had to.

WILDER.

Get in bad or something?

RYSDALE.

No, I had to pawn my evening clothes to get something to eat.

WILDER.

As bad as that, eh? How long since you been there?

RYSDALE.

About six months.

WILDER.

How did you come to know the Galloway family, in the first place?

RYSDALE.

Clarence, Mr. Galloway's son, and I were chums at college. I spent my vacation at their summer home a number of times, and when I came here to live I called two or three times a week.

WILDER.

I should think you would hate to give up friends like that.

RYSDALE.

I did. Soon after I left college his sister and I were engaged. We didn't announce it because I was just getting started in business and couldn't marry for a time. Well, you know the rest. I failed in business. I hated to lose her. She's too good for me or

any other man living, but I couldn't ask her to wait indefinitely. I didn't even have taxicab money. I couldn't explain, so I stayed away.

WILDER.

Seen any of the family lately?

RYSDALE.

Yes, but they didn't see me. I've had to dodge Clarence several times.

WILDER.

Do you know his father well enough to introduce me?

RYSDALE.

Yes, but you see ——

WILDER.

I understand, it would be breaking a long silence.

RYSDALE.

I am hardly in a position to do it.

WILDER.

Supposing you *were* in position to renew your friendly relations with the family and possibly to persuade Miss Galloway to renew her engagement, it would be a comparatively simple matter to bring Galloway and me together in a casual way, wouldn't it?

RYSDALE.

Why, certainly.

WILDER.

Would you be willing to do that for me?

RYSDALE.

I would be glad—— [*He catches himself quickly.*] What do you want to do, sell him stock?

WILDER.

Yes.

RYSDALE.

Then I would be instrumental in your unloading upon him a lot of speculative stock?

WILDER.

Do you flatter yourself that he needs you to protect his millions?

RYSDALE.

[*Slowly.*] No, it's not that.

WILDER.

You can advise him against it if you want to. I do not ask you or anyone else to endorse my proposition. I don't care whether I sell him stock or not. Through him I'll meet some of the other big fellows. I may get him to put my name up at his club.

RYSDALE.

Why do you pick out Galloway?

WILDER.

Because I'm sick and tired of doing business with little fellows. I have made a list of big men, with money, and one by one I'm meeting them. I can't walk into their offices like a common solicitor and sell them anything. I gave Mr. Lyons my advertising contract because he promised to introduce me to

Galloway, but he's either afraid or stalling me. And—look here, young fellow, first thing you know he'll be carrying off your girl.

RYSDALE.

[*Jumping to his feet.*] You mean Miss Galloway?

WILDER.

I mean Miss Galloway. He just told me they were as good as engaged.

RYSDALE.

[*Walking about.*] He told you that? Oh, she would never marry that fellow.

WILDER.

Is that so? I have known girls to marry fellows a whole lot worse than he is, just for spite.

RYSDALE.

I know, I know, but ——

WILDER.

You stayed away and left him a clear field, didn't you?

RYSDALE.

I've been waiting for a break in the luck.

WILDER.

You can't wait, man; he doesn't look like much to you and me maybe, but he may look mighty fine to her. You've got to start something and show that young lady that you're alive and kicking.

RYSDALE.

I would fight for her with my last drop of blood.

WILDER.

Now don't get romantic. Men don't buckle on their armor and grab a spear to win a woman any more. To-day a man's game is to win success and a woman's game is to marry a successful man. Don't stand in line, step out, take the middle of the road and give 'er gas!

RYSDALE.

[*Quickly.*] That's just what I'd like to do.

WILDER.

Now supposing you were to drop in on the Galloways some evening, looking prosperous and well dressed, do you think the girl would be glad to see you?

RYSDALE.

She might.

WILDER.

Here's a proposition. I'll give you five hundred dollars, cash, right now, if you'll introduce me to John Galloway within a week or ten days.

RYSDALE.

I'll do it for nothing.

WILDER.

It can't be done for nothing. It will take all of five hundred to do it right.

RYSDALE.

I don't understand you.

WILDER.

Do you think I would let you introduce me to anyone looking the way you do? You're clean, you're

honest, you're educated, but your appearance is against you. It would spoil the party and that's where the five hundred comes in. There's only one string to it.

RYSDALE.

I knew there was a catch in it.

WILDER.

You must promise to spend the money on yourself, to improve your appearance. Buy clothes, two or three different suits, get manicured, get barbered, ride in taxis, look prosperous; you'll find it won't last long.

RYSDALE.

I get the point.

WILDER.

Whatever you do in this world, you've got to look the part. What kind of a call would a parson get who went around with a red vest and cracked ice in his necktie? How much stock would a broker sell who came down-town in a hickory shirt with his pants tucked in his boots?

RYSDALE.

Where and how would you prefer to meet him?

WILDER.

Could you get him to lunch with you at some nice hotel?

RYSDALE.

I think so.

WILDER.

All right. As soon as you get your wardrobe fixed up, drop in to see him, explain that you have been away, invite him to lunch with you some day. Let me know when and where you'll be. After you have ordered the lunch, I'll stroll over and you—you'll simply have to introduce me.

RYSDALE.

Then what?

WILDER.

Then you've earned your five hundred. If you don't meet me out at his house a few evenings later, it will be because you're not there.

RYSDALE.

I certainly would like to be there.

WILDER.

[*Holding out his hand.*] Is it a bargain?

RYSDALE.

[*Grasping it.*] Yes.

[QUICK ACTION FROM NOW ON TO FINISH.]

WILDER.

[*Counting out the money on desk.*] Good! Here's the money. [*Business.*] There's ten fifties. [*Hands it to him.*] It's yours; blow it on yourself, and by the time it's gone, if you do as I tell you, you'll be sitting sweet and pretty.

RYSDALE.

What makes you say that?

WILDER.

Because it will make you independent for a little while and you know we're always helping people who don't need it. It's human nature.

RYSDALE.

[*Shoving the money in his trouser pocket.*] For whosoever hath, to him it shall be given.

WILDER.

[*Hitting him on the back.*] That's the idea. Feel better already, don't you?

[*RYSDALE picks up his satchel and stands a little straighter with shoulders thrown back and smiles. WILDER presses the buzzer.*

RYSDALE.

I do, I can't help it. You must have a lot of confidence in human nature.

WILDER.

Say, if I had your education, and your looks, I'd set the world afire. [*BUDDIE enters, R. door.*] Let me take your satchel a minute.

RYSDALE.

[*Handing it over.*] Certainly.

[*WILDER takes satchel with his left hand, and extends his right to RYSDALE.*

WILDER.

Step out, Jack. Step in again when you get fixed up.

RYSDALE.

I surely will.

WILDER.

Here, Bud. [BUDDIE comes to instant attention and WILDER throws the satchel at him.] Throw this junk into the alley.

[BUDDIE catches the satchel and exits, R. door.

QUICK CURTAIN

ACT II

SCENE.—*Ten days later. JOHN GALLOWAY'S library, Riverside Drive. Just after dinner. A large and luxuriously furnished room. In the c. at back is a wide fireplace with leather upholstered chairs at R. and L. On either side of fireplace are double doors with hangings. The one on the L. opens into a reception-room and is referred to as L. door at back; the one on the R. leads into the music room and is referred to as R. door at back. In the music room may be seen the rear half of a grand piano extending into view from the R. A door at lower R. leads into the dining-room. A wide window at lower L. in front of which is a small writing-desk, with chair of same design. A large oblong table at c., directly in front of which is a large davenport. A reading lamp on L. end of table. The two side walls of the room are lined with bookshelves and above the shelves are dark wood panels. One large oriental rug covers the floor. The shades are drawn and the lights are lit.*

As the curtain rises MRS. GALLOWAY, fifty and inclined to plumpness, enters R. door, followed by CYNTHIA BARNETT, her niece, small, twenty-one and vivacious, who is arm-in-arm with her daughter, ZOE GALLOWAY. ZOE is a handsome and perfectly poised young lady of twenty-three. They are all three laughing and talking as they enter.

CYNTHIA.

Why do men always smoke after eating?

MRS. GALLOWAY.

For the same reason, Mr. Galloway says, that women dress for the opera; endure the one to enjoy the other.

CYNTHIA.

They seem to get so much enjoyment out of it.

ZOE.

[*Stopping R. of table.*] Does it make you jealous?

CYNTHIA.

It annoys me. What right have they to enjoy anything we can't?

MRS. GALLOWAY.

[*Sitting R. of fireplace; with kindly sarcasm.*] There they are, my dear, help yourself.

CYNTHIA.

[*Opening cigarette box on table and gingerly fingering a cigarette.*] May I, Aunt Mary? What would my mother say?

[*As she toys with the cigarette, HARRIS the butler enters R. door with the after-dinner coffee things. CYNTHIA guiltily puts the cigarette and match behind her back as HARRIS proceeds to serve the coffee.*]

MRS. GALLOWAY.

If your Uncle John didn't smoke, I don't know how I could ever take care of him. He complains about not feeling well half the time and as long as his cigar

is lit, I never bother my head about him. But let me fail to see that steady column of smoke arising from wherever he is camped and I hustle him off to bed and send a hurry call for doctor and nurse. There's always something the matter.

ZOE.

Smoking is a sort of health barometer with Father.

CYNTHIA.

Well, after all, it's a silly habit for women. [*Pause.*] And I don't believe the men get so much enjoyment as they pretend they do. [*Then, turning to ZOE.*] You never wrote me about this Mr. Wilder.

ZOE.

I never saw him until this evening. Who is he, Mother?

MRS. GALLOWAY.

You'll have to ask your father.

CYNTHIA.

I think he's a charming man.

ZOE.

[*Quickly.*] Yes, he has a frank unconventional way about him that is quite refreshing.

[HARRIS, *having finished serving the coffee, exits, R. door.*]

CYNTHIA.

He doesn't believe in wasting time; before the dinner was half over he was calling me Cynthia.

ZOE.

He's from the West; they all do that.

CYNTHIA.

What! All? [*Changing her tone.*] Do you realize, dear cousin, that I've been under your hospitable roof nearly half a day and you have never once mentioned Jack Rysdale.

ZOE.

Pardon me. I'll tell you all about him.

CYNTHIA.

[*Eagerly.*] Yes, do.

ZOE.

[*Looking straight ahead.*] I haven't seen him or heard from him for—six months.

CYNTHIA.

Oh, perhaps I shouldn't have inquired.

ZOE.

How silly, why not?

CYNTHIA.

I do not want to bring up any painful topics.

ZOE.

[*Forcing a smile.*] Painful, the idea. He simply hasn't called—that's all.

CYNTHIA.

[*Rising.*] I must revise my opinion of Jack Rysdale; he has shocking bad taste.

MRS. GALLOWAY.

I quite agree with you.

ZOE.

Don't be foolish; he is under no obligation to call.

CYNTHIA.

I only hope this Mr. Lyons is as nice as I thought Mr. Rysdale was.

ZOE.

He'll be here in a few minutes and you can judge for yourself.

[Enter JOHN GALLOWAY, his son CLARENCE and WILDER, R. door. All are in evening dress. GALLOWAY is fifty, stout, hearty and good-natured and is smoking a cigar. CLARENCE is twenty-one and slender, quick and bright. GALLOWAY and CLARENCE are laughing at something WILDER has told them. CLARENCE and WILDER cross to C. and GALLOWAY goes up R. ZOE goes up in front of fireplace.]

GALLOWAY.

That's a new one on me all right. Excuse me a moment.

WILDER.

Certainly.

[CLARENCE and WILDER go to davenport. WILDER sits in C. CLARENCE stands facing him. GALLOWAY exits, R. door at back.]

CLARENCE.

Don't you ever long to get away from this big city, back to the West, the scenes of all those stories you told us?

WILDER.

Not for one minute.

ZOE.

[*Sitting at his L.*] You had awfully good times, didn't you?

WILDER.

I suppose so, but the things you were kind enough to laugh at were tragic when they happened.

CYNTHIA.

[*Sitting at his R.*] Don't you find the conventionality of New York terribly boring?

WILDER.

No, I never conform to it.

CYNTHIA.

Don't you just love to break rules?

WILDER.

That's what I've been doing all evening. [*HARRIS enters R. door to remove the coffee things. To CLARENCE.*] Say, boy, how about those tickets?

CLARENCE.

That's so, we haven't much time.

WILDER.

[*Stepping up to CLARENCE.*] Will you do that for me?

CLARENCE.

Oh, surely.

[*CLARENCE starts up R., but pauses as WILDER speaks to MRS. GALLOWAY.*]

WILDER.

You are sure you don't care to join us, Mrs. Galloway?

MRS. GALLOWAY.

No, no, thank you.

WILDER.

Four good seats, Clarence, or a box. Tell him they are for me and have them charged.

CLARENCE.

How about the two seats Mr. Lyons has?

WILDER.

I'll fix that up with Lyons.

[CLARENCE *exits*, R. door at back.]

ZOE.

Oh, I want to ask you something.

WILDER.

[*Coming back to davenport.*] Yes.

ZOE.

When Father telephoned you were coming to dinner he said you were a friend of Mr. Rysdale.

WILDER.

My. Rysdale introduced me to your father.

ZOE.

[*Surprised.*] Oh, is that so?

CYNTHIA.

Do you know Mr. Rysdale very well?

WILDER.

Well, we don't have to talk about the weather.

ZOE.

Of course it is Jack Rysdale of whom you are speaking?

WILDER.

Why, yes, young fellow, fine looking, lots of money.

CYNTHIA.

So that's the way men describe each other.

WILDER.

[To ZOE.] Do you know him?

ZOE.

[*Evasively.*] He and Clarence are good friends, I believe. That is—you are sure his name is Jack?

WILDER.

I wouldn't swear to it, but I have heard him mention your brother.

ZOE.

It must be the same one. Now you think me curious, don't you?

WILDER.

Fine fellow, lots of money, you ought to be. How about it, Miss Barnett?

CYNTHIA.

How can one help it!

[*The door-bell rings faintly off L.*]

ZOE.

When did you meet my father?

WILDER.

One noon at lunch, three or four days ago. Your father and Rysdale were together a few tables away. Rysdale called ——

ZOE.

[*Interrupting.*] You saw Father and Mr. Rysdale lunching together?

WILDER.

Yes, he called me over; we got to talking and when Rysdale had to leave, your father took me over to his club.

CYNTHIA.

Men make friends quickly, don't they?

WILDER.

[*Smiling.*] Sometimes.

[CLARENCE enters R. door at back.

CLARENCE.

I got the tickets.

WILDER.

Good, that's fine. Thank you very much.

[WILDER and CLARENCE confer together.

HARRIS enters at L. door at back.

HARRIS.

Mr. Lyons.

[HARRIS exits, L. door at back and MRS. GALLOWAY rises to meet LYONS, who enters L. door at back a moment later.

MRS. GALLOWAY.

Good evening, Mr. Lyons.

LYONS.

Mrs. Galloway.

ZOE.

How are you, Mr. Lyons?

LYONS.

You're looking charming this evening.

MRS. GALLOWAY.

My niece, Miss Barnett, Mr. Lyons.

LYONS.

Charmed, I'm sure, Miss Barnett.

CYNTHIA.

You may as well know at the start, Mr. Lyons, that I am going to spoil your evening.

LYONS.

That is impossible.

WILDER.

How are you, Lyons?

LYONS.

Oh, Mr. Wilder, good evening. Hello, Clarence.
[*The men shake hands.*]

CYNTHIA.

[*To LYONS.*] You see, Mr. Wilder and I have wished ourselves onto you and Zoe.

LYONS.

Oh, that's fine, I'm sure.

[Enter GALLOWAY, R. door at back.

ZOE.

I felt sure it would be all right.

GALLOWAY.

[Coming down.] Hello, Mr. Lyons.

LYONS.

Oh, good evening, Mr. Galloway.

GALLOWAY.

[To LYONS.] Going some place?

LYONS.

Yes, I wish you would join us.

ZOE.

[To LYONS.] Is it time to go?

LYONS.

Whenever you are ready.

ZOE.

[Taking CYNTHIA by the arm.] Come, Cynthia, we'll be ready in a moment.

[ZOE and CYNTHIA go up to L. door at back, and as they are about to exit, HARRIS enters with a card on a tray which he offers to ZOE. ZOE glances at the card without taking it from the tray, still arm in arm with CYNTHIA. Then seeing the name she quickly drops CYNTHIA'S arm and takes the card from the tray. She gives CYNTHIA a glimpse at the card,

CYNTHIA.

[*Clasping her hands.*] Oh![*ZOE, all in a flutter, runs to her mother.*

ZOE.

Mother dear, it's Mr. Rysdale.

MRS. GALLOWAY.

Are you going to see him?

CLARENCE.

[*Overhearing ZOE.*] What's that?—Rysdale?

GALLOWAY.

I forgot to tell you, he was in to see me the other day.

[*WILDER is enjoying the situation and LYONS becomes more formal than ever.*

MRS. GALLOWAY.

Were you expecting him?

ZOE.

[*Standing undecided.*] No. [There is a pause and then ZOE turns to HARRIS.] Have him come in, Harris. [HARRIS bows and exits, L. door at back.

CLARENCE.

[*To GALLOWAY.*] Did you say he was in to see you?

GALLOWAY.

Yes, he introduced me to Mr. Wilder.

CLARENCE.

Why didn't you tell me? [CLARENCE starts up to L. door at back.] Wait until I see that fellow.

[RYSDALE enters L. door at back. He now presents a strong contrast to his appearance in the first act. He has had his hair trimmed, new shoes and wears a perfectly fitting suit of evening clothes. He also has an entirely different bearing, confident and at his ease. CLARENCE delighted.] Jack!

RYSDALE.

Clarence, old boy, how are you!

ZOE.

Good evening, Mr. Rysdale.

RYSDALE.

I'm glad you are home; how have you been since I saw you?

ZOE.

So far back? I can't remember.

RYSDALE.

I deserve the reproach. How are you, Mrs. Galloway?

MRS. GALLOWAY.

Good evening; they tell me you've been away.

RYSDALE.

Yes—I—I've just returned.

ZOE.

You remember my cousin, Miss Barnett.

RYSDALE.

Of course I do. I'm very happy to see you again.

CYNTHIA.

Good evening.

ZOE.

And Mr. Lyons? Mr. Wilder and Father, I say Father last because we're all jealous of Father. He saw you first. *[The men exchange greetings.]*

LYONS.

Then you should be jealous of me because I saw Mr. Rysdale over a week ago.

ZOE.

Oh, did you?

LYONS.

[Looking RYSDALE up and down in an effort to embarrass him.] He looks so different, so changed, I should not have known him.

RYSDALE.

[Showing no embarrassment.] I hope you approve of the change.

LYONS.

A change for the better, I should say. How did you do it?

RYSDALE.

It's a long story. I'm afraid it would only bore you. Besides, Miss Galloway, I am not going to interrupt this little party for even a moment.

ZOE.

To be very frank, we were thinking of going to the opera—we would like to have you join us.

CLARENCE.

He can't go. I've got to see him myself.

RYSDALE.

[To ZOE.] Thank you very much, but Clarence is right, I can't go. I—I wanted to see your father for a moment. Is it all right, Mr. Galloway?

GALLOWAY.

Why, certainly.

WILDER.

Inasmuch as I forced myself into this party, I have the right to drop out. Rysdale, you are going in my place.

RYSDALE.

Thank you, but I couldn't think of it.

WILDER.

Oh, yes you can. If I go, I'll disgrace you all. I'm not up to Grand Opera—yet. I'll either laugh or cry in the wrong place or fall asleep. I tried it once before—you'll be doing me a favor, Rysdale.

ZOE.

Would you really rather not go?

WILDER.

There aren't enough wild horses in the world to drag me there.

ZOE.

[*Laughing.*] Perhaps you will have to join us, Mr. Rysdale.

RYSDALE.

[To WILDER.] Are you doing this just to be a good fellow or ——

WILDER.

[*Interrupting.*] Good fellow to myself, yes; you see I wasn't raised on that kind of music.

ZOE.

I presume we should be starting; will you excuse us for a moment?

RYSDALE.

Certainly.

[*ZOE and CYNTHIA go up L. and exit, L. door at back.*]

GALLOWAY.

Well, I propose to start you off by inviting you all to partake of a little after-dinner libation. After such a narrow escape Wilder needs it.

[*GALLOWAY starts R. MRS. GALLOWAY rises.*]

LYONS.

I'll try anything once.

WILDER.

Aren't you going with us, Mrs. Galloway?

[*MRS. GALLOWAY has started up L. and now turns.*]

MRS. GALLOWAY.

No, thank you. I intend to live a little longer and compared with him, Lucrezia Borgia was a soda-water saleslady.

[*Exit MRS. GALLOWAY, L. door at back.*]

GALLOWAY.

[*Making a face.*] Come on, Rysdale.

CLARENCE.

Just a minute, Dad. [GALLOWAY *links arms with WILDER and LYONS and the three exit, R. door.*] Where in Heaven's name have you been all this time?

RYSDALE.

I'll tell you all about it, Clarence, when I have more time, but right now I want to get away as soon as possible.

CLARENCE.

Get away? Why, you haven't been here five minutes.

RYSDALE.

I know. I should not have come.

CLARENCE.

For the love of Heaven! Here, sit down.

[CLARENCE *pulls RYSDALE down onto the davenport.*

RYSDALE.

Help me out, Clarence. I'll slip out now and you make some excuse to your father and the others, another engagement or something, you know.

CLARENCE.

What for? Why, you've just got here.

RYSDALE.

Well, I was a little embarrassed when I learned that Zoe was going out, so I said that I wanted to see your father about a little matter. Now as a matter of fact I haven't anything to see him about.

CLARENCE.

That's all right. Wouldn't you like to spend the evening with Father and me?

RYSDALE.

Yes, of course, but you may have other plans.

CLARENCE.

Forget it. And now listen, I'll tell you something. Are you still in the advertising business?

RYSDALE.

[*Uncertain.*] Well—er—yes.

CLARENCE.

Good. For years Lyons has had Father's advertising contract. It just recently expired and Father hasn't renewed, because he thinks he has been throwing his money away. Lyons is crazy about it; now you see?

RYSDALE.

That's very nice of you, Clarence, but ——

CLARENCE.

Go to it, old boy. I think you can land him.

RYSDALE.

[*Thoughtfully.*] Thanks, Clarence.

CLARENCE.

Too bad Zoe has to go out.

RYSDALE.

Oh, she'll have a better time than sitting around with us.

CLARENCE.

She used to think you were pretty nice, Jack.

RYSDALE.

Has she ever inquired of me?

CLARENCE.

Has she? She bothered me—well, I guess I've told you enough.

RYSDALE.

How about this fellow Lyons?

CLARENCE.

I was teasing her about him the other day. I asked her why she didn't marry him.

RYSDALE.

Yes.

CLARENCE.

She said she would if he ever stopped saying "perfectly maddening."

RYSDALE.

Perfectly maddening, eh?

CLARENCE.

He always says that when he gets excited.

RYSDALE.

Then we'll just have to keep him excited.

CLARENCE.

That's right. How are you getting along in your business, Jack?

RYSDALE.

Oh, fairly well.

CLARENCE.

You certainly look prosperous.

RYSDALE.

Glad you think so.

CLARENCE.

I wish I could get a start. I haven't done a thing since I left college.

RYSDALE.

You don't have to.

CLARENCE.

Don't I? You don't know my father. He's one of your old-fashioned fathers: wants me to start in the way he did, without a nickel. Do you think he would give me a job in his office or start me up in business? Not he. He says I've got to begin to hustle and do it quick.

RYSDALE.

No!

CLARENCE.

He has threatened to cut off my allowance. [RYS-DALE *laughs*.] It's not so funny either. [*Takes a folded check from his vest pocket.*] There's my weekly stipend—just got it.

RYSDALE.

Twenty-five dollars, that's pretty nice.

CLARENCE.

I would give anything to tell him to keep it. Don't you ever hear of business openings for a young fellow?

RYSDALE.

Have you really tried to find a position?

CLARENCE.

Have I? I have answered "ads" and hunted down all the likely places, but as soon as they learn I'm the rich Mr. Galloway's son, they think I'm no good. It's a terrible handicap to have a rich father. The only ones that offer me a job insist that Dad put a lot of money into their business and that simply makes him crazy. I daren't even mention it any more. [RYS-DALE *laughs.*] I wish I could start in on my nerve, the way you did. [RYSDALE *looks at him quickly.*

RYSDALE.

What kind of a position do you want?

CLARENCE.

Anything, just so I can be independent.

RYSDALE.

I'll keep my eyes open, old man. I'll see what I can do.

CLARENCE.

[*Impulsively.*] Will you, Jack? You haven't a place in your office, have you?

RYSDALE.

Huh? Well, I—I—I'll think about it. Let's talk it over to-morrow.

[ZOE *enters quickly, L. door at back, wearing an evening wrap and pauses to listen.*

CLARENCE.

All right. Where is your office now?

RYSDALE.

In the —— Wait, I'll tell you, let's have breakfast together in the morning.

CLARENCE.

Fine! Where?

RYSDALE.

The Biltmore, eight o'clock.

ZOE.

Eight o'clock! You better go to bed at once, Clarence.

CLARENCE.

Hello, Sis. [RYSDALE rises.] Seems good to see Jack again, doesn't it?

ZOE.

Indeed it does.

[CLARENCE rises and with a show of indifference goes R. and exits R. door.]

RYSDALE.

If you only knew what it means to me to see you again!

ZOE.

Then why haven't you come to see me before?

RYSDALE.

I couldn't.

ZOE.

Couldn't you have written?

RYSDALE.

Not very well.

ZOE.

I do not understand, but never mind. Why didn't you come to see me this evening?

RYSDALE.

I did.

ZOE.

No, you said you came to see Father.

RYSDALE.

I said that because I was disappointed that you were going out—I was trying to be a good loser.

ZOE.

Then you really came to see me?

RYSDALE.

Yes, to see you.

ZOE.

And this is the first opportunity since you returned?

RYSDALE.

Yes.

ZOE.

Oh, I'm afraid I am going to have a headache.

RYSDALE.

[*Quickly.*] I'm sorry; aren't you feeling well?

ZOE.

[*Sitting on davenport.*] Yes, but sometimes the theatre gives me a headache.

RYSDALE.

[*Sitting beside her.*] You mustn't think about it; just think of the good time you're going to have.

ZOE.

[*Watching him slyly.*] If I have a headache, I'll have to come home.

RYSDALE.

[*Not perceiving her finesse.*] Now you are *not* going to have a *headache*.

ZOE.

Perhaps I won't. Have you been far away?

RYSDALE.

Yes, I've been to a far off country, different people, different manners and customs, everything different.

ZOE.

I thought of you when I was abroad, thought possibly we might meet.

RYSDALE.

I have been to a land I hope you will never have to visit; you probably do not know that it even exists.

ZOE.

How romantic and interesting. I know; you have been on an exploring expedition and discovered new land.

RYSDALE.

Lots of people have been there before me, in fact, it's densely populated.

ZOE.

Farthest North or farthest South?

RYSDALE.

Farthest South—in happiness.

ZOE.

What is it called—this far off land?

RYSDALE.

It's called—don't be shocked, will you?

ZOE.

Of course not.

RYSDALE.

It's called—The Land of Down and Out.

[Impulsively ZOE lays a hand on his arm. She only half understands.]

ZOE.

The Land of—why, you don't mean that —
[CLARENCE enters R. door, carrying a shaker and a cordial glass. He is followed by LYONS, WILDER and GALLOWAY. They all come to C. CLARENCE goes behind table and pours a drink into the glass. ZOE and RYSDALE have risen.] Now I'll have to hurry.

[Exit ZOE L. door at back. CLARENCE hands the cordial to RYSDALE.]

RYSDALE.

Thanks, old boy.

LYONS.

By the way, Mr. Galloway, could I make an appointment with you for to-morrow?

GALLOWAY.

What for?

[RYSDALE *drinks*.

LYONS.

I have some new ideas about your advertising.

GALLOWAY.

I thought I told you I was all through advertising.

LYONS.

You'll change your mind when you see the new color scheme my artist worked out for a cake of yeast. It's simply stunning.

GALLOWAY.

You're wasting your time. I am not going to spend any more money advertising yeast. I'm going to put it into something else.

LYONS.

You can't afford not to advertise.

GALLOWAY.

Now listen; I've advertised yeast for years and years, and it's never increased my business a dollar's worth. You're in the advertising business, Rysdale, what do you think about it?

RYSDALE.

The right kind of advertising pays. You can't get away from that.

GALLOWAY.

Perhaps my business is different. It's never paid me. How about it, Wilder?

WILDER.

I don't know anything about advertising, or yeast, but offhand, I should say that yeast was a pretty dull subject to get people excited about.

GALLOWAY.

You said it!

LYONS.

That's just it; it can't be done in a minute; it takes time.

GALLOWAY.

[*With conviction not unmingled with sarcasm.*]
Time and money.

WILDER.

Yes, it must take all the brains an advertising man has to get people interested in yeast. What does yeast do anyway?

RYSDALE.

[*Simply.*] Yeast? Why, it rises and makes bread, doesn't it?

LYONS.

[*Sarcastically.*] Who would have guessed it? Rysdale, you're a wonder!

[*During the following conversation between GALLOWAY and RYSDALE, WILDER is thinking deeply and takes a little note-book from his pocket, makes a notation with his pencil, tears the sheet from the book and, folding it, unseen by LYONS and GALLOWAY, slips it into his vest pocket.*]

GALLOWAY.

How's business, Rysdale?

RYSDALE.

Oh, fine, fine—that is, pretty good.

GALLOWAY.

Glad to hear it. Where is your office now? I meant to ask you the other day.

RYSDALE.

[*Embarrassed.*] Oh, I haven't much of an office.

GALLOWAY.

[*Smiling.*] I didn't ask you *how much*; I said *where*.

RYSDALE.

[*Floundering.*] Why, my office—my office is in the—in the—I can hardly say where it is.

GALLOWAY.

Why not?

LYONS.

[*Enjoying it.*] You act as though you didn't know.

WILDER.

[*To the rescue.*] He doesn't know, exactly; do you, Rysdale?

RYSDALE.

No.

LYONS.

I suppose he's forgotten.

WILDER.

They're remodeling the building you were in, aren't they?

RYSDALE.

Er—yes.

WILDER.

I thought you decided to take that suite in the Realty Building.

RYSDALE.

[*Grasping.*] Yes—I—I have.

GALLOWAY.

That's where you are, isn't it?

WILDER.

Yes.

GALLOWAY.

Fine building; you can't go wrong there, Rysdale.

[*ZOE enters L. door at back. CYNTHIA and MRS. GALLOWAY appear in doorway, L.*

ZOE.

We're ready. [*There is a general movement.*] Good-night, Mr. Wilder; come again, won't you?

WILDER.

There's nothing can keep me away—not even Grand Opera. [*ZOE and LYONS exit L. door at back. GALLOWAY, RYSDALE and CLARENCE go up L. As RYSDALE passes WILDER, the latter takes the folded slip of paper from his vest pocket and hands it to RYSDALE.*] You dropped this in my office the other day.

RYSDALE.

[*Taking it.*] Oh, thank you; what is it? [*Rysdale and WILDER are standing a little below the*

others and RYSDALE glances at it and reads aloud, wondering.] Advertise bread, not yeast.

WILDER.

I just thought it might be a good idea.

[RYSDALE pauses to think and then looks at WILDER for a moment.

RYSDALE.

It's a great idea.

[ZOE enters L. door at back.

ZOE.

Come on, Mr. Rysdale.

RYSDALE.

[Slipping the paper in his pocket.] All right. Good-night, Wilder. You've given me something to think about.

WILDER.

I hope it keeps you awake.

[Exit RYSDALE and ZOE, L. door at back. They all disappear now but GALLOWAY and MRS. GALLOWAY, who stand in the doorway. WILDER walks up and around the table and stands in front of the fireplace. In a moment GALLOWAY and MRS. GALLOWAY come down.

MRS. GALLOWAY.

We didn't intend to leave you all alone, Mr. Wilder.

WILDER.

Oh, I'm all right; I don't require much attention.

GALLOWAY.

Wilder and I are going up to my Holy of Holies to have a little chat.

MRS. GALLOWAY.

Indeed you are not. That horrid, stuffy place? Stay right here and when I consider you have chatted long enough, I shall come to interrupt you.

[MRS. GALLOWAY *starts up* E.

WILDER.

Don't leave us, Mrs. Galloway.

MRS. GALLOWAY.

Don't argue, chat while you may.

[MRS. GALLOWAY *exits*, R. *door at back*.

WILDER *offers* GALLOWAY *a cigar*.

GALLOWAY.

Oh, thanks. [They *light their cigars and sit on the davenport*, GALLOWAY *in the L. corner and* WILDER *in the R.*] Well, I'm glad you came around to-night.

WILDER.

So am I. I didn't get out of that Grand Opera thing very gracefully, but I am satisfied with the result.

GALLOWAY.

The result is good.

WILDER.

How's the yeast business?

GALLOWAY.

Same old story. I can tell you within a few dollars just what I'll make every year.

WILDER.

I should think it would be monotonous.

GALLOWAY.

It is. I've trained a lot of young fellows to do most of my work. All I do is to look over their reports.

WILDER.

That's good business. No man ever got very far who stuck to detail. How would you like a little excitement?

GALLOWAY.

What do you mean?

WILDER.

I mean get into a business where there was something doing all the time, something new every minute.

GALLOWAY.

Now you're going to tell me about that Tungsten proposition.

WILDER.

[*Laughing.*] Exactly.

GALLOWAY.

It has a sort of fascination, I'll admit. Ever since you first mentioned it, I've been keeping track of the quotations; just couldn't keep my eyes away.

WILDER.

If you owned some of that stock you would take a new interest in life.

GALLOWAY.

You mean I would lose every dollar I put in and take a new interest in the old yeast business.

WILDER.

[*Laughing again.*] Even that might be worth while. As a matter of fact, you probably have all the money you will ever need, and I would be foolish to suggest your getting in to make a killing, but—I'll guarantee you'll have a lot of fun.

GALLOWAY.

Now, just between us, what is back of that Tungsten stock?

WILDER.

Three things. Fifteen hundred acres of land, a hole in the ground and—possibilities.

GALLOWAY.

That's what I thought.

WILDER.

It's a development proposition. After the development work is done and we find what we know is there, the stock will be worth from five dollars a share up.

GALLOWAY.

And if you *don't* find what you know is there?

WILDER.

There'll be a lot of people who are sad but wiser.

GALLOWAY.

That's gambling, and I never gamble.

WILDER.

It's not gambling, it's speculation.

GALLOWAY.

All right. I never speculate.

WILDER.

Are you sure you don't? I know the word speculation has a bad sound, and I think that is because most men speculate with other people's money, but any man who has never speculated with his own money has missed a lot. It keeps me young and will take ten years off any man's life. How much money did you spend this year advertising yeast?

GALLOWAY.

A hundred thousand.

WILDER.

All right; *you* said a few minutes ago that it was thrown away; *I* would say that you speculated and lost.

GALLOWAY.

That is one way of looking at it, but this proposition of yours is nothing but speculation pure and simple.

WILDER.

You are right; but tell me something that isn't.

GALLOWAY.

The yeast business is rather a safe and sound proposition.

WILDER.

It is now, of course; but how about it years ago when you started your first little factory—did you sell your friends any stock then?

GALLOWAY.

[*Laughing.*] No. They wouldn't risk a dollar. I had to worry along alone.

WILDER.

Too speculative, I suppose. But how about these same friends after you had built up a successful business and didn't need their dollars?

GALLOWAY.

After I had all the money I needed they were sore because I wouldn't issue new stock for their special benefit.

WILDER.

I could go to those same friends of yours to-day and sell them Tungsten stock much easier than I could ever have sold them stock in your yeast business, and that's just the point I am trying to make, namely, that everything is speculative in its infancy.

GALLOWAY.

Even babies. Why, I remember my mother telling me that when I was born the old women of the neighborhood shook their heads and said I would never live.

WILDER.

[*Laughing.*] And look at you now.

GALLOWAY.

[*Joining him.*] And look at me now.

WILDER.

Now just supposing you switched that hundred thousand dollar advertising appropriation into Tungsten, you couldn't do worse than lose it, and at the very least you ought to double it.

GALLOWAY.

[*Interested.*] You really believe that?

WILDER.

Why, the stock has only to sell at sixty-eight for you to double your money, and I believe down in my boots that it's worth five dollars. Confidentially, I am going to begin to unload my holdings at around seventy and all the way up. I wouldn't advise any man to put his stock away in a strong box and forget about it. I would say hold it until the big fellows on the street get on to what is really doing in Tungsten and then get out and let some one else hold the bag.

GALLOWAY.

I suppose that is just the way some fellows make a lot of money.

WILDER.

You're right. When Tungsten begins to rise, and it will when we are ready to let out certain information, you'll think there's yeast in it. There's nothing can stop it but the sky and it's going to hit the blue dome with a bang that will be the talk of Broad Street; every share will be a Declaration of Independence for the man who owns it, and that is when you and I get out from under.

GALLOWAY.

Are you holding much of the stock yourself?

WILDER.

I'm black with it.

GALLOWAY.

I suppose it would be rather exciting to see the price go up and figure just when we ought to sell.

WILDER.

Exciting? Boy! it will make your hair grow, and when you sell it's just like seeing your horse stick her nose across the tape.

GALLOWAY.

What's it worth to-day?

WILDER.

Closed at thirty-four-and-a-half, but I'm going to let you in at the syndicate price of twenty-eight. Syndicate will be dissolved in nineteen days and you can sell it whenever you want to.

GALLOWAY.

I might take a little flyer just for the excitement, as you say I can't do worse than lose it. Suppose you drop into my office in the morning.

WILDER.

All right. Some new ore samples came in to-day —

GALLOWAY.

[*Interrupting.*] I don't want to see them; I wouldn't care a hang for a car load. When I go into this, it will be on your say so.

[*Enter CLARENCE, R. door at back.*

WILDER.

You've got the right idea about this thing Hello,
Clarence.

CLARENCE.

[*Discouraged.*] Hello.

GALLOWAY.

What are you doing around here?

CLARENCE.

Trying to think of something to do.

GALLOWAY.

If you worked the way I do every day, you would
be glad to stay home and rest.

CLARENCE.

I'm not dodging work, Father; you can't accuse me
of that.

GALLOWAY.

I don't accuse you; everybody knows it.

CLARENCE.

Now, Father, that's unfair—I ——

GALLOWAY.

[*Interrupting.*] I'll tell you what I'll do. You
and Wilder come up to the billiard-room and I'll play
you both.

WILDER.

You're on.

CLARENCE.

You and Mr. Wilder go ahead; I would rather not
just now.

GALLOWAY.

[*Rising.*] Come on, Wilder.

WILDER.

Better come along, Clarence, and help me trim him.

CLARENCE.

Please excuse me this time. [GALLOWAY and WILDER link arms and exit R. door at back. CLARENCE lights a cigarette and, sitting on the davenport, smokes thoughtfully and dejectedly for a few moments. ZOE, followed by RYSDALE, enters, L. door at back.] Hello! What's up?

ZOE.

Where is Father?

CLARENCE.

In the billiard-room with Mr. Wilder.

ZOE.

Tell him to come right down, Clarence. Jack wants to see him on business.

RYSDALE.

There is no need to hurry. I merely want to see him this evening.

CLARENCE.

All right. [*Exit CLARENCE, R. door at back.*]

ZOE.

Do you realize we rode all the way home and hardly spoke a word to each other?

RYSDALE.

It is so wonderful to be near you again. There is nothing I want to say, nothing I can say.

ZOE.

[*Sitting on davenport.*] Well, I have been thinking of what you told me—about your being away.

RYSDALE.

Let's talk of something cheerful.

ZOE.

I think I understand now. You haven't been away at all; you have met with some misfortune that has kept you away from your friends.

RYSDALE.

[*Sitting beside her.*] That's it. I have been down and out, but I've come back. I lost everything, Zoe, everything but the memory of you and our friendship.

ZOE.

You did think of me?

RYSDALE.

Think of you! Any man who tries to get you away from me is going to have a fight on his hands.

ZOE.

Tries to get me away?

RYSDALE.

I know just where you stand in my life. You are the one big, important factor. Without you, I can't think ahead; I can't plan anything in my life; my existence is a blind alley; with you, I can see far into

the future and plan important happy things and you are included in all of them. I don't know where I stand with you now and I'm afraid to ask, but I do know where I am going to stand with you when you know me a little better. I have always loved you, Zoe, I will always love you. I shouldn't tell you this now, but—you're not offended?

ZOE.

I believe adversity is a good thing—at times, it ——

RYSDALE.

[*Turning to her quickly.*] Zoe!

[*Enter CLARENCE, R. door at back.*

CLARENCE.

Father will be right down. I'm going back to finish his game.

RYSDALE.

Oh, Clarence, I want to see you for just a minute.

[*CLARENCE comes down, ZOE rises.*

ZOE.

I'll tell Mother I'm home and be right back.

[*Exit ZOE, L. door at back.*

RYSDALE.

Clarence, do you want a place in my office?

CLARENCE.

[*Overcome.*] Do I?

RYSDALE.

I've been thinking it over. You can start in tomorrow if you want to.

CLARENCE.

Jack, you're not doing this just out of—of sympathy?

RYSDALE.

It's a cold business proposition with me, Clarence. I'm all alone, and I need a good, faithful right-hand man on whom I can rely.

CLARENCE.

I'll work my head off for you, Jack.

RYSDALE.

Will fifty dollars be all right to start on?

CLARENCE.

Fifty a month?

RYSDALE.

No, a week.

CLARENCE.

Am I worth it, Jack?

RYSDALE.

You'll think so when you see the work I have cut out for you.

CLARENCE.

May I tell Father?

RYSDALE.

Suit yourself about that.

CLARENCE.

I won't tell him where it is just yet. How about our breakfast engagement?

RYSDALE.

Let's make it seven instead of eight—at Childs'—Realty Building.

CLARENCE.

All right. I won't sleep a wink to-night, I'm so happy I want to shout. [*Swelling up his chest.*] I need air to fill my lungs. Oh, I've got to go up and trim that man Wilder. Before he's through with me he'll think he is playing Willie Hoppe.

[*RYSDALE is thoughtful. CLARENCE exits R. door at back. RYSDALE takes the slip of paper WILDER gave him from his pocket and reads it aloud.*]

RYSDALE.

Advertise bread, not yeast.

[*ZOE enters L. door at back. RYSDALE is absorbed and doesn't notice her as she comes down.*]

ZOE.

[*After a pause.*] Thinking about—business?

RYSDALE.

[*Rising.*] Zoe, it's the biggest proposition I ever tackled. [*Enter GALLOWAY, R. door at back.*]

GALLOWAY.

What's the matter with the opera?

ZOE.

Jack wants to talk to you about some business.

RYSDALE.

I am afraid I am making it appear too important, but Zoe thought you might have retired if we waited until the opera was over.

GALLOWAY.

She is right.

RYSDALE.

So I spoiled her evening and the party by leaving.

GALLOWAY.

I have never been able to get away with anything like that—they always put a ball and chain on me.

ZOE.

But this is important.

RYSDALE.

Please don't think me crazy, Mr. Galloway, but I have a plan whereby you can double your yeast business within a year.

GALLOWAY.

Where have I heard that before?

RYSDALE.

It means that you will have to build another factory.

GALLOWAY.

It has been five years since I have built a factory—what is it?

RYSDALE.

I would rather not go into it now in detail, but I would like to have fifteen minutes of your time tomorrow morning.

GALLOWAY.

[*Suspiciously.*] Some new way to advertise yeast?

RYSDALE.

No, sir, I do not want you to advertise yeast at all.

GALLOWAY.

Well, sir, if you can tell me in fifteen minutes how to double my business, I'll give you a week.

RYSDALE.

Thank you, Mr. Galloway. What time can I see you?

GALLOWAY.

I am going to be out most of the morning. Supposing I drop into your office about eleven o'clock?

RYSDALE.

[*Up against it.*] You don't need to go to that trouble.

GALLOWAY.

Think of all the trouble you have gone to this evening. I want to see you.

RYSDALE.

Well, thank you, I—I ——

GALLOWAY.

Are you going to be in all morning?

RYSDALE.

Not all morning—part of the morning.

GALLOWAY.

Well, would eleven o'clock be about right?

RYSDALE.

Yes, I can be there at eleven.

GALLOWAY.

Let me see, you're in the Realty Building?

RYSDALE.

[*Going ahead blindly.*] Er—yes—the Realty Building.

GALLOWAY.

What floor?

RYSDALE.

[*Recklessly.*] The tenth—that is—no, it's not the tenth. You know I've had such a time getting located, I really have forgotten.

GALLOWAY.

I'll ask the starter; he'll know.

RYSDALE.

Yes, he'll know. I must be going. I have some work to do before I go to bed. Good night, Mr. Galloway.

GALLOWAY.

[*Shaking hands.*] Good night, Rysdale. I like to see a young fellow keep busy. I used to be that way myself.

ZOE.

[*As RYSDALE turns up L.*] Mother asked me to invite you to dinner to-morrow night. Will you come?

RYSDALE.

Surely I'll come, thank you.

[RYSDALE and ZOE exit L. door at back, talking as they go out. GALLOWAY starts up R. as WILDER and CLARENCE enter, R. door at back.

GALLOWAY.

Oh, here you are.

WILDER.

I don't know what you're training this young fellow for, but if it is for anything except handling a cue, you're wasting your time.

GALLOWAY.

If he was half as good in business as he is at shooting those balls around I would be a happy father.

CLARENCE.

[*With dignity.*] What do you mean, Father?

GALLOWAY.

You know what I mean—I want you to go to work.

CLARENCE.

I have a good position.

GALLOWAY.

What's your salary?

CLARENCE.

Fifty dollars a week.

GALLOWAY.

[*Thunderstruck, but pleased.*] You're not worth it, but I'll never give you away.

CLARENCE.

[*Taking the allowance check from his pocket.*]
Here's your last allowance check; I no longer need it,
or want it.

GALLOWAY.

Don't try to fool me, young man.

CLARENCE.

[*Sternly.*] Do I look as though I were fooling?
Take it.

GALLOWAY.

Oh, you better keep it.

CLARENCE.

No, thank you. I like this independent feeling.
[*Swelling up.*] It's great.

[*GALLOWAY takes the check and slowly tears
it up.*]

GALLOWAY.

Fifty dollars a week. Clarence, my boy, I'm proud
of you.

CLARENCE.

Where's Rysdale?

GALLOWAY.

He left in a hurry; said he had some work to do.

WILDER.

Rysdale's a smart young fellow, isn't he, Mr. Gal-
loway?

GALLOWAY.

You bet he is. He left the opera with the best girl
in the world because he had some business on his
mind.

WILDER.

You can't beat that, can you?

GALLOWAY.

No, sir. Clarence, you can study that young fellow and learn something.

CLARENCE.

That's just what I'm going to do, Father.

CURTAIN

ACT III

SCENE.—*The following morning. A suite of offices in the Realty Building, fourteenth floor. The room has the same color walls, woodwork, etc., as WILDER'S office in Act I. Double windows at R., with dark colored drapes. A door at C. leading into corridor. A door at L. leading into adjoining room. Sectional book-shelves at back to the right of C. door. The shelves are bare. A second-hand typewriter on the floor L., below L. door, and near it a New York telephone directory.*

Before the rise of the curtain sounds of activity are heard on stage, pounding, talking and the moving about of heavy furniture. As the curtain rises RYSDALE is discovered standing on window-sill, R., arranging the hang of the curtains. He is well dressed in a light business suit, but is working in his shirt sleeves. An ELECTRICIAN is busy at R. with the wires of the telephone. His bag of tools and the instruments are beside him. A PAINTER is just finishing the lettering on C. door, which reads, "J. C. Rysdale, Advertising Engineer." "Private." The door is swung open. Two TEAMSTERS enter C. door carrying a mahogany stenographer's desk. They stop at C. and look to RYSDALE for directions.

[*Note that everyone works fast in this scene, indicating that RYSDALE has them under pressure.*]

RYSDALE.

A little further over. [*The TEAMSTERS carry desk L. until RYSDALE speaks.*] There!

[*The TEAMSTERS put down desk and exit quickly, C. door. RYSDALE jumps down from sill and moves the desk a little to suit himself. The PAINTER begins gathering up his things.*

PAINTER.

Anything more you want done?

[*RYSDALE turns and surveys his work.*

RYSDALE.

That'll be all, thank you.

PAINTER.

Do you want the bill now?

RYSDALE.

Can't be bothered now. Mail it.

PAINTER.

Yes, sir.

[*PAINTER is about to exit, C. door, when the two TEAMSTERS enter there, carrying a long, flat-top mahogany desk. The PAINTER exits, C. door.*

RYSDALE.

Over here. [*The TEAMSTERS carry the desk R. and place it across the windows. The TEAMSTERS exit C. door. RYSDALE glances nervously at his watch, then steps to L. door. The ELECTRICIAN now places the telephone on the flat-top desk. RYSDALE speaking*

off L.] That looks pretty good, Clarence; what do you think of my curtains?

[CLARENCE, also in his shirt-sleeves, enters, L. door, carrying a hammer, and stands in admiration of the curtains.

CLARENCE.

Jack, you hang curtains just like a bride.

RYSDALE.

Thanks. [*The two TEAMSTERS now enter, C. door, one carrying a swinging chair for the desk and a stenographer's chair, and the other two straight office chairs. The last man exits at once and reënters with two more straight chairs and then waits at the door. The first TEAMSTER takes a delivery book from his pocket for RYSDALE to sign.*] That's all of it?

FIRST TEAMSTER.

Yes, sir.

[RYSDALE signs the book.

CLARENCE.

[*Taking a straight chair.*] May I use one of these out there?

RYSDALE.

Go ahead. [*The two TEAMSTERS exit, C. door. CLARENCE exits, L. door, carrying a chair. RYSDALE begins to arrange the other chairs. To ELECTRICIAN.*] When can I have service?

ELECTRICIAN.

In just half a minute now.

RYSDALE.

[*Examining telephone.*] Is this a nickel 'phone?

ELECTRICIAN.

Yes, sir.

RYSDALE.

I didn't order a nickel 'phone.

ELECTRICIAN.

[*Pausing.*] I can change it, but you won't be able to get service to-day.

RYSDALE.

Go ahead, don't stop; I'll have it changed some other time.

[RYSDALE *tries the drawers of his desk, puts the telephone book on the desk and is placing the typewriter on the stenographer's desk when CLARENCE enters, L. door. The ELECTRICIAN is now about finished and in low tones is testing its connection with Central office.*

CLARENCE.

Haven't you some pictures for the walls?

RYSDALE.

No, I—I am going to get some new ones. [*The ELECTRICIAN gathers up his tools.*] All right?

ELECTRICIAN.

Yes, sir.

CLARENCE.

Shouldn't that stenographer be here by this time?
[*Exit ELECTRICIAN, C. door.*

RYSDALE.

She should. Call them up for me, will you?

CLARENCE.

Sure.

RYSDALE.

[*Feeling in his pockets.*] You'll have to have a nickel for that 'phone. I haven't any.

CLARENCE.

[*Same business.*] Just one. [*He holds it up.*]

RYSDALE.

Good.

[CLARENCE looks up the number in the book.
RYSDALE glances about, looks at his watch
and exits, L. door.]

CLARENCE.

[*Over telephone.*] Main four-eight-five. That's right. Hello.....Typewriter Exchange? Where is that stenographer you were going to send over to Mr. Rysdale's office?.....I wouldn't be telephoning if she were.....She must have been kidnapped.....Well, if she isn't here in fifteen minutes we have to try some one else.....All right, good-bye. [*As CLARENCE hangs up, RYSDALE enters, L. door, wearing his coat.*] She's on her way over.

RYSDALE.

That's good. You see, Clarence, we must have the office settled and running before eleven o'clock.

[CLARENCE looks at his watch.]

CLARENCE.

That was the time Dad was to be here, wasn't it?

RYSDALE.

Yes.

CLARENCE.

[*Worried.*] Jack, you haven't sold him stock in your business, have you?

RYSDALE.

No, sir. Don't you worry about that. I took the tip you gave me last night.

CLARENCE.

Did you say anything to him about hiring me?

RYSDALE.

Not a word.

CLARENCE.

Good!

RYSDALE.

Clarence, that printer promised to have a hundred letter heads printed by ten o'clock—will you run over and get them for me?

CLARENCE.

Sure.

RYSDALE.

On your way back stop in the stationery store down-stairs and get some pens, pencils, ink-wells, desk calendars and so forth, enough to start us off.

CLARENCE.

[*Going up L.*] All right. Leave it to me.

RYSDALE.

And hurry back.

CLARENCE.

You bet.

[*Exit CLARENCE, C. door. RYSDALE, with hands in his pockets, walks about deep in thought. WILDER enters, L. door, smoking a cigar.*]

WILDER.

Hello!

RYSDALE.

Hello there.

WILDER.

Quick work, all right! Got your name on the door and everything.

RYSDALE.

It was this or nothing.

WILDER.

You are lucky, all right. You took an awful chance on finding *anything* vacant. You'll need both rooms and there's nothing like putting up a front.

RYSDALE.

It's putting up the rent that bothers me.

WILDER.

How much?

RYSDALE.

Two hundred and twenty-five,—in advance.

WILDER.

Not bad.

RYSDALE.

I didn't have any money, so I put him off and gave your name as a reference. Do you mind?

WILDER.

The agent called me up and I told him I gave you five hundred the other day without the scratch of the pen. He fell for it.

RYSDALE.

Good for you. I suppose you've guessed what it's all about?

WILDER.

I have a sneaking suspicion.

RYSDALE.

I am framing up a deal this morning that will mean around twenty-five thousand dollars in commissions and start me in business again.

WILDER.

And you had to have an office to put it over?

RYSDALE.

Exactly.

WILDER.

Supposing it doesn't go over?

RYSDALE.

Then I go to jail. I've gone in debt for everything here. After paying for my breakfast I had ten cents left. I bought a six-cent cigar and there's my present working capital [*Taking four pennies from his pocket.*] four cents.

WILDER.

Young fellow, you've simply got to put it over.

RYSDALE.

I'll put it over or bust, and the first thing I am going to do with the money is to pay you back that five hundred.

WILDER.

You fulfilled your part of the bargain. You don't owe me a nickel.

RYSDALE.

I warn you, you are not going to sell Galloway any stock.

WILDER.

No? I'm going over to see him now.

RYSDALE.

You won't find him. He'll be here at eleven.

WILDER.

Oh, thanks. What are you going to do with him?

RYSDALE.

Get him to advertise bread.

WILDER.

Bread instead of yeast, huh?

RYSDALE.

That's a great idea, Wilder. I'll bet my life Galloway has never thought of it. I am going to use it.

WILDER.

Go to it.

RYSDALE.

After all you've done for me, it seems like turning on you. I don't believe for a minute that Galloway will buy your stock and advertise, both.

WILDER.

Then it will be a fair and stand-up fight between us. Our cards are on the table. If you can talk him out of Tungsten into advertising, more power to you.

RYSDALE.

But this is your own idea I am using.

WILDER.

[*Smiling.*] I gave it to you, didn't I? There wasn't any string to it.

RYSDALE.

Wilder, with your brains, your personality, your experience, you would make a great business man if you only would get into some legitimate game.

WILDER.

What's the matter with my game?

RYSDALE.

It doesn't make you many friends, does it, real friends?

WILDER.

[*Seriously.*] Sometimes. Sometimes not.

RYSDALE.

You have done more for me than I can ever repay — [*Suddenly.*] Why don't you come in with me, Wilder, be my partner? I'll give you an interest in my business for that five hundred.

WILDER.

You haven't any business,—yet.

RYSDALE.

I will have before the day is over. We'll make a big thing of it. It will be the best investment you ever made.

WILDER.

I don't know anything about advertising.

RYSDALE.

You knew enough to advertise bread instead of yeast. You know more right now than I do. Come on, Wilder.

WILDER.

No, I've been in the other game too long.

RYSDALE.

You've been in it long enough. Think it over.

WILDER.

All right.

[MISS WILLIAMS, *the new stenographer, enters, L. door. She is about thirty-five, plain and unattractive, but a regular man-hunter.*

MISS WILLIAMS.

Good morning.

RYSDALE.

Oh, good morning.

MISS WILLIAMS.

Is Mr. Rysdale in?

RYSDALE.

I am Mr. Rysdale.

MISS WILLIAMS.

I am Miss Williams from the Typewriter Exchange.

RYSDALE.

You'll find a closet for your things in the other office. I'll be with you in a moment.

MISS WILLIAMS.

Thank you.

[She lays her hand-bag on the typewriter desk, and then exits, L. door, removing the pins from her hat as she goes out.]

WILDER.

She's plain enough to be a good worker.

RYSDALE.

Yes.

WILDER.

Anything I can do to help out?

RYSDALE.

Nothing I can think of, thank you.

WILDER.

[Starting up L.] Well, don't hesitate to call on me.

RYSDALE.

By the way, did they deliver that Encyclopedia you bought of me last week?

WILDER.

Yes, and it's all right, too.

RYSDALE.

Those shelves look pretty bare. Could I borrow it for a day?

WILDER.

Why, certainly. I'll send Bud right up with it.

RYSDALE.

No, no, I'll send down for them.

WILDER.

[*In c. doorway.*] No you won't. Bud needs a little work. Success to you.

RYSDALE.

[*Going up.*] Thanks, Wilder. Come in again.
[*Exit WILDER, c. door. RYSDALE goes to L. door.*] Miss Williams.

MISS WILLIAMS.

[*Off L.*] Yes, sir.

[*RYSDALE crosses R. to his desk and MISS WILLIAMS enters, L. door, without her hat and coat.*]

RYSDALE.

I have an important contract proposition to draw up, so please familiarize yourself with the machine at once.

MISS WILLIAMS.

[*Stiffly.*] I am familiar with all the standard machines.

RYSDALE.

I'm glad of that.

[MISS WILLIAMS *sits at her desk, takes the cover from the machine and, after clattering a few keys, turns to RYSDALE with ill-concealed disgust.*

MISS WILLIAMS.

Do you expect me to write on this—relic?

RYSDALE.

It's a second-hand machine, I know, but it is supposed to be in first-class condition.

MISS WILLIAMS.

[*Peering into it.*] It's a first-class ruin.

RYSDALE.

[*Coming over.*] Write a few lines, so I can see how it looks. [MISS WILLIAMS *looks about for paper and begins opening the drawers of her desk.*] That's a new desk; there is no paper in it, but I'll have some for you in a few minutes.

MISS WILLIAMS.

Oh, I suppose it will write, but your letters will never look like anything.

RYSDALE.

What's the matter with it?

MISS WILLIAMS.

Well, it needs a new set of type, a new ribbon, a new roller, and there's something the matter with the carriage spring.

RYSDALE.

Otherwise it's all right?

MISS WILLIAMS.

I think the keys are out of alignment, but I can't tell for certain until I have some paper.

RYSDALE.

Should I get a new machine?

MISS WILLIAMS.

You'll never be satisfied with this.

RYSDALE.

I'll tell you what I'll do. If you satisfy me, I'll let you select a new machine.

MISS WILLIAMS.

If *I* satisfy you?

RYSDALE.

I don't know; you may be as bad as the machine.

MISS WILLIAMS.

That's what I get for accepting a twenty-dollar-a-week position. It serves me right. Never before have I worked for less than twenty-five dollars.

RYSDALE.

Why did you leave your last position?

MISS WILLIAMS.

[*With excessive dignity.*] I was obliged to leave for family reasons.

RYSDALE.

Family reasons? Are you married?

MISS WILLIAMS.

No, but my employer was.

RYSDALE.

Oh, I see; married man with jealous wife.

MISS WILLIAMS.

[*Pleased and flattered.*] Yes; how clever you are; but it wasn't my fault.

RYSDALE.

[*With double meaning.*] Oh, I'm sure of that.

MISS WILLIAMS.

That's so kind of you to say, Mr. Rysdale. Some women are so unreasonable.

[*From now on she drops her critical attitude and tries to please him.*]

RYSDALE.

You won't have any trouble of that kind here.

MISS WILLIAMS.

[*With a sigh.*] I'm so glad you're not married. It's the married men I'm afraid of. They are always more dangerous.

RYSDALE.

It makes no difference whether I am married or not. I am running this office ——

MISS WILLIAMS.

[*Quickly.*] Oh, I am sure we shall get on together beautifully.

[*RYSDALE takes a folded piece of paper from his pocket.*]

RYSDALE.

I have written this out in long hand. You might try to read my writing and then you can copy it as soon as the stationery comes.

MISS WILLIAMS.

[*Looking it over.*] What a beautiful manly hand!

[*RYSDALE turns to give her a look, but she looks away coquettishly.*]

RYSDALE.

I am going out to get shaved. If anyone calls, tell them I'll be back in five minutes and have them wait.

MISS WILLIAMS.

I understand.

[*RYSDALE exits, c. door. MISS WILLIAMS takes a little mirror and powder puff from her hand-bag and proceeds to beautify herself with much care. While thus engaged MR. SEAMONS enters, c. door.*]

SEAMONS.

Good morning, is Mr. Rysdale in?

MISS WILLIAMS.

He just stepped out. Won't you wait?

SEAMONS.

How long will I have to wait?

MISS WILLIAMS.

About five minutes.

SEAMONS.

Is there a Mr. Lyons here?

MISS WILLIAMS.

I never heard that name.

SEAMONS.

[*Looking at his watch.*] I was to meet him here at this time.

MISS WILLIAMS.

You might wait for him.

SEAMONS.

I'll be back shortly, and if Mr. Lyons should come in before I return, please tell him to wait for me, will you?

MISS WILLIAMS.

Certainly. I'll be glad to.

[SEAMONS takes a careful look around the office and exits slowly, c. door. MISS WILLIAMS puts away her toilet articles and walks to windows and is looking out when BUDDIE enters L. door with the set of Encyclopedia held in place by his chin. He has all he can carry.]

BUDDIE.

[*After waiting a moment.*] Well, where d'you want them?

MISS WILLIAMS.

I am sure I don't know. What are they?

BUDDIE.

Books. And in about a second dis is going to be a juggling act.

MISS WILLIAMS.

Why don't you put them on the book-shelves?

BUDDIE.

[*With his last breath.*] All right. [*He gets them to RYSDALE'S desk just as they begin to get away from him, and he and the books sprawl over the desk.*] Whad' I tell you.

[*MISS WILLIAMS helps him put them on the shelves.*]

MISS WILLIAMS.

They look like very nice books.

BUDDIE.

Yes, dey look all right, but dere ain't nothing in them. Dey's supposed to tell you anything you wants to know, about famous men and all dat; and, say, dere ain't a thing about de New York Gints, not even any batting averages.

MISS WILLIAMS.

That's too bad. Do you know Mr. Rysdale very well?

BUDDIE.

Sure I know him.

MISS WILLIAMS.

Is he married?

BUDDIE.

[*Going L.*] Search me.

MISS WILLIAMS.

Aren't you his office boy?

BUDDIE.

[*Turning at L. door.*] Naw, naw. I work for Mr. Wilder. You bet your sweet life *he* ain't married.

MISS WILLIAMS.

I didn't ask you if he was.

[*As BUDDIE turns to go, CLARENCE hurries in L. door with his arms full of office supplies and bumps into him.*]

BUDDIE.

Say!

CLARENCE.

Oh, excuse me, my boy.

BUDDIE.

[*As a parting shot.*] What d'you think you're doing—sliding into second?

[*Exit BUDDIE, L. door. MISS WILLIAMS comes down L. and CLARENCE unloads his supplies on RYSDALE'S desk.*]

MISS WILLIAMS.

Are you the office boy?

CLARENCE.

[*Busy with the bundles.*] Sure! Don't I look like one?

MISS WILLIAMS.

No, you look too old.

CLARENCE.

Looks are sometimes deceiving. Now, you don't look a bit like a stenographer, but I'll bet that's what you are.

MISS WILLIAMS.

[*Coyly, taking it as a compliment.*] Isn't it strange, a great many men have told me the same thing. But you are right, I am Mr. Rysdale's private stenographer.

CLARENCE.

[*Stopping to look at her.*] Private stenographer!

MISS WILLIAMS.

Perhaps confidential would be a better or more proper word

CLARENCE.

[*Busy again.*] Yes, confidential sounds good. My name is Galloway.

MISS WILLIAMS.

Mine is Bernice Williams.

CLARENCE.

No, is that so? Where is Mr. Rysdale?

MISS WILLIAMS.

He went out to get shaved, but he didn't look as though he needed a shave at all.

CLARENCE.

Oh, he gets shaved every week whether he needs it or not.

MISS WILLIAMS.

[*Turning on him.*] Say, what are you trying to do,—kid me?

CLARENCE.

My dear young lady!

MISS WILLIAMS.

[*Seeking for information.*] Are you new here, or have you known Mr. Rysdale some time?

CLARENCE.

This is my first day.

MISS WILLIAMS.

Then I don't suppose you have met his wife yet.

CLARENCE.

[*Laughs.*] His wife?

MISS WILLIAMS.

Is there something funny about her?

CLARENCE.

I don't know. I haven't met her yet.

MISS WILLIAMS.

Do you know that he *is* married?

CLARENCE.

I know this, that if he is married, she'll be in here soon enough to look you over.

MISS WILLIAMS.

[*Resignedly.*] I suppose so. I hope she hasn't a jealous disposition. Men always seem to like me better than women.

CLARENCE.

It's fate, I guess.

MISS WILLIAMS.

You look too old to be an office boy.

CLARENCE.

I'm younger than I look; had to work since I was eight years old, earn my own living.

MISS WILLIAMS.

Poor boy, how dreadful.

[*By this time CLARENCE has RYSDALE'S desk fixed up with ink-well, a large blotter pad, pens, pencils, a spindle, etc., and now undoes a package of stationery.*

CLARENCE.

You want some of these letter heads, don't you?

MISS WILLIAMS.

Yes, please.

[*CLARENCE takes over to her desk a supply of letter heads, envelopes and a pencil and exits L. door, with the balance of his supplies. MISS WILLIAMS studies the letter head and then slips one into her machine and begins rapidly to copy the contract. RYSDALE enters, C. door.*

RYSDALE.

Hello; anyone call?

MISS WILLIAMS.

A boy brought those books. Oh, yes, a gentleman called and inquired for you and Mr. Lyons, I think, he said.

RYSDALE.

Who was it?

MISS WILLIAMS.

He didn't give me his name, but he said he would be back in a few minutes.

RYSDALE.

Always get their name after this, please.

MISS WILLIAMS.

Yes, sir, I didn't know you wanted me to, but I will after this.

[RYSDALE *turns and is looking at his desk, when CLARENCE enters, L. door, and joins him.*

RYSDALE.

That looks fine, Clarence.

CLARENCE.

Hope I didn't forget anything.

RYSDALE.

Got anything to smoke?

CLARENCE.

[*Offering him his case.*] A cigarette.

RYSDALE.

Thanks.

CLARENCE.

May I, too?

RYSDALE.

Certainly, go ahead. [*As they light up, MISS WILLIAMS stares in amazement at CLARENCE. RYSDALE to MISS WILLIAMS.*] Would you mind stepping into the other office for a moment?

MISS WILLIAMS.

[*Sweetly.*] Certainly not.

[*Exit MISS WILLIAMS, L. door.*]

RYSDALE.

I don't believe we want her in here.

CLARENCE.

I should say not.

RYSDALE.

[*Surprised.*] Why?

CLARENCE.

If I didn't know you were single, I would think your wife picked her out.

RYSDALE.

[*Laughs.*] I don't care about her looks, it's the noise.

CLARENCE.

She told me she was your confidential stenographer.

RYSDALE.

That settles it. We'll move her desk into the other office.

CLARENCE.

[*Bowing.*] Near me, thank you.

RYSDALE.

[*Stepping to L. door.*] Miss Williams. [*Miss WILLIAMS enters, L. door.*] We have decided to have your desk in the other office.

MISS WILLIAMS.

Perhaps that would be better.

RYSDALE.

Yes, you see, I want you to interview everyone who calls. Do not let anyone enter this office without announcing them.

MISS WILLIAMS.

[*Attempting indifference.*] To avoid any misunderstanding, will it be necessary to announce your wife when she calls?

RYSDALE.

My wife?

MISS WILLIAMS.

Mrs. Rysdale, perhaps I should have said.

RYSDALE.

[*Sternly.*] Announce everybody.

MISS WILLIAMS.

Very well.

RYSDALE.

Have you made a copy of that contract?

MISS WILLIAMS.

I haven't finished it.

RYSDALE.

Please do so at once. This is Mr. Galloway, my office manager. Please do whatever he tells you, as he has full authority and I hold him responsible in all matters pertaining to the office. [MISS WILLIAMS *gasps*. CLARENCE *is a little surprised.*] Help me

with the desk, Clarence. [RYSDALE and CLARENCE carry the desk to L. door and exit. MISS WILLIAMS follows them, pushing her chair. RYSDALE reënters L. door before she exits.] As soon as you finish that contract, keep busy on something else, especially when anyone comes in. Keep writing, write to your friends, write anything, but keep busy.

MISS WILLIAMS.

I understand.

RYSDALE.

Thank you.

[Exit MISS WILLIAMS, L. door. RYSDALE goes to his desk and, taking a few of the letter heads, tears them into four pieces and is jamming them onto the two spindles on his desk when CLARENCE enters, L. door. CLARENCE closes the door after him.]

CLARENCE.

Aren't the letter heads all right?

RYSDALE.

[Tearing more of them.] Haven't looked at them.

CLARENCE.

Well, I—I paid five dollars for that stationery.

RYSDALE.

Wouldn't he trust you?

CLARENCE.

No. I gave him all I had and promised the balance when he sent over the rest of it.

RYSDALE.

That's good. Just keep track of these little items, Clarence, until we have time to settle up. [*Feeling in his pockets.*] I haven't any change. I am filling up these spindles so it will look busy around here.

CLARENCE.

Say, Jack, before Father comes —

RYSDALE.

[*Glancing at his watch.*] Eleven o'clock; he should be here now.

CLARENCE.

Before he gets here, can't you give me some real work to do? I want to be terribly busy, so I won't have time to talk to him.

RYSDALE.

A good idea. [RYSDALE *thinks a moment.*] I have it. [*Goes to book-shelves.*] Here you are, B, B, B, Y, Y, [*Takes down two volumes.*] B for Bread, Y for Yeast; read up on Bread and Yeast, then write it down. Or, better yet, dictate it to Miss Williams; that'll keep her busy, too. As soon as she has a page finished, bring it in to me.

CLARENCE.

[*Taking books.*] Great! I'll make the one-armed paperhanger look like a chess player. [CLARENCE *rushes off L. door, leaving it open. The sound of feminine voices is now heard with the clatter of the typewriter.* CLARENCE *off L.*] Well, go in and see anyway.

[*Enter ZOE and CYNTHIA, L. door.*

RYSDALE.

Hello! Good morning. How are you?

[RYSDALE *dusts off the chairs with his handkerchief.*

ZOE.

Are you glad to see us?

RYSDALE.

Glad? I—I'm speechless.

CYNTHIA.

It's Mr. Lyons' fault.

RYSDALE.

That you are—I always knew he would bring me good luck.

ZOE.

We're shopping. We almost ran over poor Mr. Lyons. He said he was on his way to see you, so we picked him up.

CYNTHIA.

Zoe wanted to see your office and Mr. Lyons said he did, too.

RYSDALE.

Fine. Where is he?

ZOE.

[*Pointing L.*] Out there.

CYNTHIA.

I think you have a beautiful office.

RYSDALE.

What's the idea?

ZOE.

I think so, too, everything is so new and— [*Looking about.*] simple.

CYNTHIA.

Isn't it? I would like to work here.

ZOE.

What makes Clarence act so terribly important?

RYSDALE.

He's my office manager.

ZOE.

Who ever thought he could be so sly about anything.

CYNTHIA.

Mr. Wilder is in this building, isn't he?

RYSDALE.

Yes, two floors down.

ZOE.

Go back to your horrid old business, we're going.

RYSDALE.

Don't go. I expect your father here in a few minutes. I haven't anything to do until he comes, and afterwards what do you say if I get Wilder and we all lunch together?

CYNTHIA.

I think that would be lovely.

ZOE.

How about our shopping?

RYSDALE.

Oh, you can shop any time.

ZOE.

We might shop now and then call for you.

RYSDALE.

Will you do that?

ZOE.

What time?

RYSDALE.

Twelve-thirty, but you can't go unless you promise to come back.

[*Enter MR. LYONS, L. door.*]

LYONS.

Good morning.

RYSDALE.

Good morning, Mr. Lyons; come in.

LYONS.

I didn't know you had your office in this building until Mr. Galloway told me.

RYSDALE.

Well, I haven't been here very long.

LYONS.

[*Gingerly touching the paint on c. door.*] I should say not, judging by the freshness of the paint.

RYSDALE.

That isn't the only thing that's fresh around here.

[CLARENCE enters, L. door.]

CLARENCE.

Pardon me, may I see you a moment, Mr. Rysdale?

RYSDALE.

[Crossing to L. door where CLARENCE stands.]
Excuse me.

[LYONS walks over to ZOE and CYNTHIA, and
RYSDALE and CLARENCE confer in low tones
near L. door.]

CLARENCE.

The agent of the building is out there and I can't get rid of him.

RYSDALE.

What does he want?

CLARENCE.

The first month's rent in advance.

RYSDALE.

You tell him I am in the midst of an important conference and as soon as I am free you will get me to sign a check.

CLARENCE.

He says he will have to have it right away.

RYSDALE.

Tell him we're all upset with moving, but that you will bring it in to-day.

"STEP OUT—JACK!"

CLARENCE.

All right.

[CLARENCE turns to go and MISS WILLIAMS enters, L. door.

MISS WILLIAMS.

Mr. Galloway wants to see you.

RYSDALE.

Have him come right in.

[Exit MISS WILLIAMS, L. door. CLARENCE throws back his shoulders, takes a brace and starts to exit and bumps into his father as he enters, L. door.

GALLOWAY.

Hello, Clarence, where's the fire?

CLARENCE.

Excuse me. I'm very busy.

[Exit CLARENCE, L. door

GALLOWAY.

[Seeing ZOE.] Well, well, quite a gathering. How does it come your mother isn't here too? Isn't it enough to take up the time of these young men in the evening without bothering them during the day?

LYONS.

This is a special occasion. Look out for the paint.

GALLOWAY.

[Side-stepping.] Paint, what paint?

RYSDALE.

[Laughing.] Mr. Lyons has been trying to rub the paint off the door.

ZOE.

[*Going L.*] Good-bye, we're going.

CYNTHIA.

[*Following.*] Don't forget to get Mr. Wilder.

RYSDALE.

[*Going with them.*] I won't. Don't forget to come back. [*Exit ZOE and CYNTHIA, c. door. RYSDALE goes to c. door and locks it.*] Sit down, Mr. Galloway. [*GALLOWAY does so and LYONS starts to do likewise.*] Did you want to see me, Mr. Lyons?

LYONS.

Not particularly, but I did want to see Mr. Galloway.

GALLOWAY.

I had an appointment with Mr. Rysdale for eleven.

LYONS.

If you don't mind, I'll wait for you in the outer office.

GALLOWAY.

All right. [*Exit LYONS, L. door. RYSDALE closes the door after him and goes back to his desk.*] Is this the job Clarence told me about?

RYSDALE.

I suppose it is.

GALLOWAY.

What did you want to hire *him* for? He hasn't any experience.

RYSDALE.

He must get his experience somewhere and he is just the kind of a man I want.

GALLOWAY.

Well, make him toe the mark the way I had to.

[CLARENCE *jerks open the door at L. and rushes in to RYSDALE.*

CLARENCE.

It's all right, Mr. Rysdale; he said you could send it down any time to-day.

RYSDALE.

Oh, yes; thank you, Clarence.

[CLARENCE *wheels and never looking at his father rushes off L., slamming the door after him.* GALLOWAY *stares.*

GALLOWAY.

[*After an open-mouthed pause.*] I never knew that boy to have so much pep. New broom, new broom, make him keep it up.

RYSDALE.

Oh, he's all right.

GALLOWAY.

Well, young fellow, here's your fifteen minutes; what have you got?

RYSDALE.

You are the largest yeast manufacturer in the country, are you not?

GALLOWAY.

I own or control seventy-nine per cent. of the yeast made in the United States.

RYSDALE.

[*Genuinely interested.*] Is that so?

GALLOWAY.

Yes, and let me warn you, the only way I can increase my business, beyond the slight gains caused by the increase in the population, is to put some competitor out of business. That's something I do not want to do, and besides it would get the Government after me.

RYSDALE.

Then all you can do is to increase the consumption of yeast.

GALLOWAY,

[*Warily.*] That's about the proposition.

RYSDALE.

As I understand it now, the population of the country increases a little year by year with a corresponding increase in yeast consumption.

GALLOWAY.

Yes, except that the consumption of yeast does not increase in the same proportion as the population. We're always a little behind and we're getting farther behind every year.

RYSDALE.

That is very interesting. Bread is the principal thing for which yeast is used, of course.

GALLOWAY.

Yes, sir.

RYSDALE.

And all these years you have been advertising its goodness, its purity, how well it works and all that?

GALLOWAY.

Yes. I have increased my advertising appropriation from twenty-five to one hundred thousand dollars a year and it hasn't tipped the scales in my favor a hair's breadth.

RYSDALE.

Then if you control the same percentage of business year after year there can be only one conclusion, namely that the people are eating less bread than formerly.

GALLOWAY.

That's the logical conclusion.

RYSDALE.

Then how would it be to make them eat more bread?

GALLOWAY.

Fine, but how are you going to do it?

RYSDALE.

I'll answer that by asking you who made the people eat Corn Flakes, Grape Nuts, Shredded Wheat, Puffed Rice, Postum, Cracker Biscuit and all the rest of the new-fangled food stuff not nearly so wholesome or beneficial as good well baked bread, bread

the staff of life, the oldest food product in the history of the world? Who made them do it? An advertising man, not a fifty dollar a week copy writer, but in each case a man with brains, instinct and originality. The people never knew these things existed until he told them in an attractive, pleasing way. Why, when you stop to think of the other food products that have been advertised, it's a wonder the people haven't stopped eating bread altogether.

GALLOWAY.

[*Seriously.*] Yes, that might make a difference.

RYSDALE.

If the people stopped eating bread, you would have to find another business, wouldn't you?

GALLOWAY.

I suppose I would.

RYSDALE.

[*Impressively.*] Mr. Galloway, why don't you advertise bread?

GALLOWAY.

Bread?

[CLARENCE enters L. door with a typewritten sheet of paper in one hand and a volume of the *Encyclopedia* in the other. He hands the paper to RYSDALE and never looking at his father exits L. door in a great hurry.]

RYSDALE.

[*Reading from the paper.*] Bread, the staff of life; all through the ages bread always has been the chief

source of human energy. Bread alone will sustain human life better than any other one food.

GALLOWAY.

[*Not looking at RYSDALE but deeply interested.*] You're right.

RYSDALE.

[*Same business.*] Without bread the human race could not exist. Statistics prove that the progress of every nation in civilization and achievement is in exact ratio to its consumption of bread. Among the poor, bread constitutes fifty per cent. of their diet; among the rich from six to twenty per cent. In the tenement districts, seventy-five per cent. of all the food consumed is bread in one form or another. Bread is the cheapest, most nutritious, most healthful food product known to mankind. It contains every needful constituent of human food. There is no waste. It all goes towards building bone, brain and muscle. Children thrive on it, grown people depend on it for health, strength and longevity, it—it—— [RYSDALE *has read all that CLARENCE has copied and now drops the paper.*] Bread presents better and more natural possibilities for advertising than any product I have ever handled, and it can't be made without yeast.

[RYSDALE *pauses to see what effect it is having on GALLOWAY. GALLOWAY is more greatly interested than he cares to show, as he doesn't fancy the idea of having a younger man tell him something new.*

GALLOWAY.

[*After a pause.*] I'll admit you have a bright little idea, but you haven't gone half far enough.

RYSDALE.

[*Promptly.*] I know it. It is so big I can't begin to grasp it.

[*GALLOWAY jumps to his feet and starts walking about as he talks and the idea grows.*

GALLOWAY.

How much money do you think it would take?

RYSDALE.

Two hundred thousand to start.

GALLOWAY.

You forget this is going to boost the business of the wholesale and retail baker. Why should I put up all the money?

RYSDALE.

I never thought of that. You shouldn't. The baker will be glad to coöperate.

GALLOWAY.

We could get the Baker's Association interested. I could put in one or two hundred thousand, and get them to put in the same amount. In the big cities and in the little towns we could run the "ads" over the name of the baker who buys our yeast. I believe we could make the people eat more bread.

RYSDALE.

[*Enthusiastic.*] That's great, I know it. Tell the people about its food value, show them how it looks when it is baked right, rich, brown and appetizing, tell them a lot of things about it they never thought of before.

GALLOWAY.

[*Trying to restrain his enthusiasm.*] I believe it can be done, young fellow, I believe it can be done.

RYSDALE.

It can be done and done big, and oh, Mr. Galloway, think, just think of the run for their money you can give these new-fangled food makers.

GALLOWAY.

Do you think you are big enough to handle this for me?

RYSDALE.

I am.

GALLOWAY.

[*Making up his mind.*] Let's do it. Start to-day. There's going to be some excitement, let me tell you. Shake on it. [*They clasp hands.*] What commission do you charge?

RYSDALE.

Fifteen per cent.

GALLOWAY.

You're high. This will run into half a million before we're through with it.

RYSDALE.

I have no apologies to make for fifteen per cent.

GALLOWAY.

Lyons never charged me over ten per cent.

RYSDALE.

This is a big proposition. I couldn't handle it for less.

GALLOWAY.

When can we start the ball a rolling?

RYSDALE.

The minute you sign the contract.

GALLOWAY.

Where is it?

[RYSDALE goes to L. door, and opens it.

RYSDALE.

Is the Galloway contract ready? [MISS WILLIAMS appears at L. door and hands RYSDALE two typewritten copies. RYSDALE hands one to GALLOWAY and goes around back of his desk with the other. MISS WILLIAMS exits L. door closing it after her.] It's not very long but —

GALLOWAY.

[Adjusting his glasses.] I'm glad it's short. Don't believe in contracts anyway. [As RYSDALE reads his copy he keeps glancing at GALLOWAY who reads it through quickly.] Huh, well, I could haggle over this if I wanted to.

RYSDALE.

I know you could. Is there anything in particular to which you object?

GALLOWAY.

No-o, but it's about the stiffest proposition I ever had put up to me.

RYSDALE.

[*With earnest sincerity and feeling.*] You put up the money and then I'm the one who has the stiff proposition. I've got to put it through. I am going to give you all I've got, Mr. Galloway. Every ounce of creative and constructive energy I possess goes back of your campaign. We're going to create a bread appetite in the American people that will boost the price of flour and compel you to build another factory.

GALLOWAY.

I'll build the factory.

RYSDALE.

I'll build the demand.

GALLOWAY.

Give me a pen and let's get started. [RYSDALE hands GALLOWAY a pen and GALLOWAY dips it in the ink-well. He starts to write and then holds up the pen and looks at it.] No ink!

RYSDALE.

[*Looking into ink-well.*] No ink? [*Getting up and crossing L.*] Whenever they clean my ink-well they always forget to fill it. [*Opening L. door.*] Clarence! Miss Williams! [RYSDALE comes back to his desk and MISS WILLIAMS enters, L. door, followed by CLARENCE.] Ink, ink, where's the ink?

MISS WILLIAMS.

Ink? Why, how should I —

RYSDALE.

Where is the boy who cleaned my ink-well?

CLARENCE.

Why, I—the boy? I think he's out on an errand.

RYSDALE.

Please get me some ink, and when that boy comes back, fire him.

CLARENCE.

Yes, sir. I'll get some ink right away.

[CLARENCE *marches out, L. door, followed by*
MISS WILLIAMS.

RYSDALE.

I'm very sorry, Mr. Galloway. I suppose we could use a pencil.

GALLOWAY.

[*Leaning back.*] There is no particular hurry.
[*Looking about.*] Rather a nice office. Everything looks brand new.

RYSDALE.

Oh, you should see the typewriter.

[*Someone tries to enter at c. door but it is locked. The strain is beginning to tell on*
RYSDALE *and he jumps.*

GALLOWAY.

What typewriter?

RYSDALE.

I mean my typewriter.

GALLOWAY.

[*Laughing.*] Oh, you mean your stenographer.

RYSDALE.

No, no. I mean the machine. It's terribly old. You can see right here. [*He holds the contract in front of GALLOWAY.*] You see, the face of the type is almost worn off.

[*CLARENCE enters L. door, closing it after him. He tries to conceal the excitement he feels.*

CLARENCE.

Excuse me, a Mr. Seamons is out there and says he must see you at once.

RYSDALE.

Tell him I am engaged. How about the ink?

CLARENCE.

Miss Williams has gone after it.

[*Exit CLARENCE, L. door.*

RYSDALE.

We'll show the people a crisp, brown loaf of bread that will make their mouths water.

GALLOWAY.

Like mother used to bake.

RYSDALE.

Exactly. We'll make a partner out of the best baker in every town.

[*Enter CLARENCE, L. door, much worried.*

CLARENCE.

He says he can't wait, that he's got to —

RYSDALE.

Can't wait? He's got to wait, and don't interrupt me again, please.

CLARENCE.

Yes, sir, but ——

RYSDALE.

Don't argue, that's final. Tell him to come back this afternoon.

CLARENCE.

Yes, sir, but you see—he—he has—he has another party with him, who ——

RYSDALE.

I don't care if he has the Chief of Police with him. [*Exit CLARENCE, L. door.*] Where was I? Oh, it's a coöperative plan from start to finish. It might not be a bad idea to figure on plans for a new factory at once, for we're going to double the baker's sales inside of six months.

[*A commotion is heard off L. The L. door is opened two or three inches a number of times and then slammed shut, indicating a struggle on the other side. Finally the L. door is jerked violently open and COLLINS, a big, burly Deputy Sheriff in full uniform enters, with CLARENCE hanging desperately on to him. COLLINS shakes him loose and gives him a push which sends CLARENCE flying out L. door.*]

COLLINS.

Come on, Mr. Seamons, and say, young feller [*Off L. to CLARENCE.*] another peep out of you and I'll run you in, see!

[*SEAMONS enters, L. door, and RYSDALE meets them both at C.*]

RYSDALE.

What do you mean by forcing your way into my private office?

COLLINS.

[*Brutally.*] Is your name Rysdale?

RYSDALE.

Yes, but ——

COLLINS.

Shut up. I'm talking now. Is this your office?

RYSDALE.

Seamons, do you know anything about this?

SEAMONS.

Well, you see, I have got tired waiting ——

COLLINS.

We ain't here to answer questions; we're here to ask them.

RYSDALE.

If you will kindly step into the other office, I'll answer all your questions in just a moment.

COLLINS.

Nothing doing.

RYSDALE.

Can't you see I am busy?

COLLINS.

You're not half as busy as you're going to be.

GALLOWAY.

Officer, aren't you playing a rather high hand?

COLLINS.

Don't worry about me; I know what I'm doing.

RYSDALE.

[*To GALLOWAY.*] Someone has made a very foolish mistake, Mr. Galloway. I only regret that it should happen while you are here.

GALLOWAY.

[*Getting out a cigar.*] Oh, that's all right. I'll step out into the hall for a minute if you want me to.

RYSDALE.

I'll settle this thing in two minutes.

COLLINS.

You bet you will.

[*GALLOWAY goes to c. door and exits. RYSDALE goes with him and then comes back to COLLINS and SEAMONS.*]

RYSDALE.

Well?

SEAMONS.

Can you pay that judgment of four hundred and fifty dollars?

RYSDALE.

I'll pay it with interest if you will give me a little time.

COLLINS.

That ain't the question; can you pay it now or can't you?

RYSDALE.

I just told you I would pay it —

COLLINS.

Listen, we're going to settle this thing here and now.

[Enter LYONS, L. door.]

RYSDALE.

What do you want now?

LYONS.

Where is Mr. Galloway?

RYSDALE.

[*Out of patience.*] Look here, Lyons, you've guided these fellows here. You've done your duty, now get out and don't bother me again.

LYONS.

[*Sneering.*] Oh, very well.

[Exit LYONS, L. door.]

RYSDALE.

I don't carry four hundred and fifty dollars around with me every day. On the first of the month, Seamons, I'll have fifteen hundred dollars coming in and I'll pay you out of that.

COLLINS.

[*Pushing RYSDALE aside.*] That settles it. Does this desk belong to you?

RYSDALE.

Yes, sir.

COLLINS.

Clean it out.

RYSDALE.

What?

COLLINS.

Get your papers together. I'll give you one minute.

RYSDALE.

What for?

COLLINS.

I'm going to satisfy this judgment.

RYSDALE.

Don't let him do it, Seamons. I'm just getting a start. By the first of the month I'll be on my feet. It'll break me if you do this. You never will get your money.

SEAMONS.

I'll get it right now.

COLLINS.

Do you want me to dump out these drawers myself?

RYSDALE.

I've got a big deal on, Seamons. It will all go to smash if you sell me out; it will ruin me.

[During the above COLLINS begins jerking open the empty drawers.]

COLLINS.

Hell! there ain't nothing in it.

[COLLINS slams the drawers shut and crossing up L. purposely bumps into RYSDALE and then opens C. door.]

SEAMONS.

You can't blame me, Rysdale.

[*As COLLINS comes back to the desk, MISS WILLIAMS enters, L. door, with a small bottle of ink.*]

MISS WILLIAMS.

Here's the ink.

RYSDALE.

[*Taking it.*] Thanks.

COLLINS.

He don't need ink any more.

[*An idea comes to RYSDALE and taking MISS WILLIAMS by the arm, he draws her aside.*]

RYSDALE.

[*To COLLINS.*] Just a moment, please. [*To MISS WILLIAMS.*] Run down to Mr. Wilder's office on the twelfth floor, ask him for a blank check out of his check book. Tell him to come up in a few minutes and I'll explain. Hurry as fast as you can; that's a good girl.

MISS WILLIAMS.

Mr. Wilder, twelfth floor, blank check.

RYSDALE.

That's right. Hurry!

[*MISS WILLIAMS exits C. door quickly, closing it after her. RYSDALE walks deliberately to his desk, planks down the ink-well, sits in his chair and smiles at COLLINS.*]

COLLINS.

What you grinning about?

RYSDALE.

It's all right, Mr. Deputy, you took me a little by surprise. Do you really think you want this furniture?

COLLINS.

Do I really think—say!

RYSDALE.

It's a mere matter of form, I know, but before you touch a thing in this office, I'll have to make sure of your authority.

COLLINS.

That's easy. [*COLLINS takes a legal looking document from his pocket and turns back his coat, showing his badge.*] I'm a Deputy Sheriff, see. Here is Execution Assumpsit number two-twenty-nine, authorizing me to seize any and all of your possessions if necessary, at any and all times to satisfy this judgment.

RYSDALE.

[*Leaning back easily.*] That's all right. But it doesn't give you the right to break in here and interrupt and interfere with my business.

COLLINS.

Aw, cut that stuff.

[*COLLINS takes hold of the desk and starts to drag it away. RYSDALE jumps to his feet in a flash and speaks sharply.*

RYSDALE.

Wait! [*COLLINS pauses in sheer wonder. RYSDALE looks him up and down.*] You have a beautiful uniform, you're a fine big fellow, you must weigh

over two hundred pounds and you may have the right to enforce the law, but you talk and act as though you made the law.

COLLINS.

Say, what are you trying to pull?

[RYSDALE comes around his desk and gets up close to him.]

RYSDALE.

You play fair with me and I'll play fair with you, but just you try to crowd me and I'll get you and get you right. Keep in mind that you are not a king but a hired servant of the people; that I and every other business man pay out taxes so you can have a job. We don't hire you to insult and bully us before our friends and clients; we hire you to *protect* us.

COLLINS.

[Giving ground.] Hold on now, hold on.

RYSDALE.

You mustn't think you can get boisterous around here, just because I have an old debt on my hands and haven't four hundred and fifty dollars jingling in my pockets. Get off your high horse and talk this thing over quietly, [*In a loud voice.*] quietly, I say, or you'll find that I have friends in the City Hall. I'll take that beautiful uniform off your back and you'll go back to driving a truck.

[COLLINS is intimidated but tries to conceal it.]

COLLINS.

You can't throw that kind of a bluff into me.

[RYSDALE goes after him now harder than ever.]

RYSDALE.

Just you start to tear up this office and see who's bluffing. [*Pause.*] If you weren't so fat you wouldn't be even funny.

[*COLLINS mops his brow and looks to SEAMONS.*

SEAMONS.

[*To RYSDALE.*] Well, what are you going to do about it?

RYSDALE.

I am going to pay you and get rid of you.

COLLINS.

Why didn't you say so in the first place?

SEAMONS.

You said you couldn't pay.

RYSDALE.

I can't until I get a check. I just moved in here this morning. I'm all upset, can't find my check book. I sent my girl to a friend of mine in the building who checks on the same bank. As soon as she gets back with a check I'll pay you.

COLLINS.

We want the cash. [*MISS WILLIAMS enters, L. door, all out of breath, with a check in her hand. RYSDALE takes and sits at his desk. MISS WILLIAMS exits, L. door. As RYSDALE writes the check, COLLINS and SEAMONS confer together.*] How do we know your check is any good?

RYSDALE.

How do you know any check is good? If anyone was as suspicious as you are there wouldn't be any banks. [*Offering the check.*] Take it over to the bank and get your money.

COLLINS.

[*Stopping SEAMONS from taking it.*] And give you time to move out your stuff or lock us out. I guess not.

RYSDALE.

If you fellows try to persecute me, I'll tear this up and smash the furniture before I'll let you have it.

COLLINS.

[*Looking in the telephone book.*] Go ahead, take his check. I'll soon find out if it's any good.

[*SEAMONS takes the check.*]

RYSDALE.

You can't use that 'phone.

COLLINS.

Why can't I?

RYSDALE.

You're taking up too much of my time.

COLLINS.

Where do you get that stuff?

RYSDALE.

I've been very patient with you fellows. You have your money. Now let me go ahead with my business or I'll call up the bank myself and have them stop payment on that check.

SEAMONS.

It won't take but a second.

[COLLINS takes up the telephone and waits.
RYSDALE stares at him helplessly. MISS
WILLIAMS enters, L. door. RYSDALE crosses
to meet her.

COLLINS.

[Rattling the hook.] Hello, hello, central, hello.

MISS WILLIAMS.

Mr. Wilder is out there.

RYSDALE.

Please tell him to wait just a moment.

MISS WILLIAMS.

Yes, sir.

[MISS WILLIAMS exits, L. door. COLLINS is
fussing with the telephone and rapidly los-
ing his temper. RYSDALE goes around back
of his desk.

COLLINS.

What's the matter with this 'phone? Out of or-
der?

RYSDALE.

The way you've been jerking this desk around, it's
a wonder if it isn't. You have no right to use that
'phone without my permission.

[SEAMONS has been examining the telephone.

SEAMONS.

Did you drop your nickel in?

COLLINS.

[*Searching his pockets; very impatient.*] No; is this a nickel 'phone? Got a nickel, Seamons?

SEAMONS.

[*Same business.*] No, sir, I haven't.

COLLINS.

Neither have I.

SEAMONS.

Haven't you a nickel or a slug, Rysdale?

RYSDALE.

[*Honestly.*] I haven't, and I wouldn't give it to you if I had.

COLLINS.

You're a fine business man, you are.

RYSDALE.

I told you in the first place you couldn't use that 'phone.

SEAMONS.

There's a telephone at the cigar stand down-stairs, Collins; we can use that.

COLLINS.

All right. I suppose your check is good anyway, but if it isn't, I'll be back here on the double quick with a warrant for you. [SEAMONS *opens c. door.*

RYSDALE.

Now don't you try to frighten me again. [COLLINS *exits, c. door, followed by SEAMONS. RYSDALE closes*

the door after them and goes quickly to L. door and opens it.] Wilder, Mr. Wilder.

[WILDER enters, L. door.]

WILDER.

Hello, what's the excitement?

[WILDER crosses to C. RYSDALE speaks off L.]

RYSDALE.

Lock the outside door, Clarence, and, until I tell you, let no one in but your father. *[RYSDALE closes L. door and leads WILDER to the telephone.]* Please, Wilder, call up your bank, make it good, that check, four hundred and fifty.

WILDER.

What check?

RYSDALE.

That blank check you gave me. Seamons was here with the Sheriff to clean me out. There's not a minute to lose. It's my only chance. I made them take it. I had to get rid of them; they're down-stairs now telephoning the bank to see if the check is good. If you don't hurry, they'll beat us to it. They'll be back here on the double-quick—I'll be ruined forever.

WILDER.

I thought I knew something about frenzied finance, but you've got me buried.

RYSDALE.

[Frantic.] Oh, Wilder, call the bank; you've got friends over there. You can explain; tell them to honor that check, charge to your account, anything. Come on, Wilder, come on, it's my last chance.

WILDER.

[*Sternly.*] Don't you know that is very irregular?

RYSDALE.

Of course it's irregular, but I'll pay it back, every penny, a hundred times over.

WILDER.

Have you closed with Galloway?

RYSDALE.

No, but I'm going to.

WILDER.

I think you are, and I will be as honest with you as you have been with me. I met Galloway out in the hall a few minutes ago. He won't buy a nickel's worth of Tungsten.

RYSDALE.

I'm glad of it, for your own sake: but that check——

WILDER.

[*Interrupting.*] Rysdale, I like your nerve; is that offer you made me still good?

RYSDALE.

To be my partner? Of course it is.

WILDER.

[*Taking up the telephone.*] I'm on. Hello, operator, hello.

RYSDALE.

[*Dancing about.*] It's a nickel 'phone; haven't you got a nickel?

[*WILDER pulls out a handful of loose change.*

WILDER.

I've got everything but a nickel.

[*RYSDALE throws up his hands and dashes to L. door.*

RYSDALE.

[*Shouting off L.*] A nickel, a nickel, Miss Williams, have you got a nickel?

[*MISS WILLIAMS enters, L. door, searching in her purse. RYSDALE hovers over her.*

MISS WILLIAMS.

Here's one!

RYSDALE.

Oh, you darling!

[*RYSDALE takes the nickel and throws both arms about her and jerks her into a sudden embrace, then dashes to telephone and drops the nickel. MISS WILLIAMS is stunned at first, then pleased and walks coquettishly to L. door, humming a little air and arranging her hair.*

WILDER.

[*At 'phone.*] Cortland eight hundred.....that's right.....City National? Mr. Perkins, pleaseHello, Perkins.....this is Wilder.....fine, sir.....how are you.....Say, Perkins, I let a friend of mine use my check book.....he's drawn a check for —

RYSDALE.

Four hundred and fifty.

WILDER.

Four hundred and fifty dollars.....his name is Rysdale. [*Spelling it.*] R-y-s-d-a-l-e.

RYSDALE.

J. M.

WILDER.

J. M. Rysdale. What's that? Wait a minute. [*To RYSDALE.*] He says his assistant is talking to the Sheriff right now.

RYSDALE.

Go on, go on.

WILDER.

[*Over 'phone.*] Well, tell him it's all right. Charge to my account. Yes, and I'll bring Rysdale over and have him open an account. New customer for you. All right; thank you, Perkins, good-bye.

[*As WILDER puts down the 'phone, RYSDALE grasps his two hands and fairly dances him around.*]

RYSDALE.

Great, immense, you've saved the day.

[*CLARENCE looks in L. door.*]

CLARENCE.

Dad's here.

RYSDALE.

Good boy, bring him in.

[*Exit CLARENCE, L. door.*]

WILDER.

Do you want me to go?

RYSDALE.

We're partners now; you've got to see this deal through.

WILDER.

Step out, Jack, and give 'er gas.

[Enter GALLOWAY, L. door.]

RYSDALE.

I hope you didn't get tired waiting, Mr. Galloway.

GALLOWAY.

No, no. Hello, Wilder. [To RYSDALE.] Have your friends gone?

RYSDALE.

[Smiling.] Yes, they've gone.

GALLOWAY.

What's the matter, Rysdale, are you in some kind of trouble?

RYSDALE.

Why, no.

GALLOWAY.

You were certainly looking worried when I left you.

RYSDALE.

[Laughing.] Oh, that sheriff had a judgment against a fellow named Rysdale. A stupid blunder. He was going to seize my furniture to satisfy it. [RYSDALE pauses, and a far-away look comes into

his eyes.] I used to know that fellow he was after. His name was Rysdale and he was a sort of down-trodden, weak-kneed individual. You met him once, Wilder.

WILDER.

Sure, I remember.

RYSDALE.

He came into your office once, peddling books and coat hangers.

WILDER.

That's the fellow; we bought his books and threw his coat hangers into the alley.

RYSDALE.

That's the fellow he was after; it took me some time to convince him of his mistake.

GALLOWAY.

[*Satisfied.*] That was a strange coincidence.

RYSDALE.

Wasn't it? [Enter MISS WILLIAMS, L. door.

MISS WILLIAMS.

[*With severity.*] You—I think—your wife would like to see you.

RYSDALE.

You think my wife? I'd like to see her.

MISS WILLIAMS.

[*Head in air.*] Oh, very well.

[MISS WILLIAMS turns and exits, L. door, quickly.]

RYSDALE.

[*Following her.*] Hold on there, who is it? [*The door slams in his face.*] There's something the matter with that girl.

GALLOWAY.

[*Laughing.*] Why didn't you tell us you were married?

RYSDALE.

I think she's crazy.

[*As RYSDALE gets back to C., ZOE enters, L. door.*]

ZOE.

Are you ready?

RYSDALE.

Oh, hello, it's you.

ZOE.

Good morning, Mr. Wilder.

WILDER.

Good morning.

ZOE.

Cynthia is waiting in the car.

WILDER.

She won't have long to wait—for me.

RYSDALE.

We'll be ready in a few minutes.

ZOE.

Father, are you detaining Mr. Rysdale?

GALLOWAY.

Maybe I am. I don't know.

RYSDALE.

[*Going back to his desk.*] No, no, I am just waiting for him to sign a certain paper—and by the way I have some ink now.

ZOE.

Please don't spoil our party, Father; if Mr. Rysdale wants you to sign a certain paper, why don't you do it?

[*GALLOWAY looks at RYSDALE and smiles. RYSDALE dips a pen in the ink and hands it to him. GALLOWAY signs both copies of the contract.*

RYSDALE.

The four of us were going to lunch together, Mr. Galloway; won't you join us?

GALLOWAY.

[*Rising.*] What do you want with an old fellow like me along?

ZOE.

[*Putting her arm through his.*] To pay the check, of course. [*WILDER has gone up and opens c. door. ZOE and GALLOWAY are about to exit when she turns back.*] Please go on. I must telephone to Mother. [*GALLOWAY and WILDER exit, c. door. ZOE comes down to telephone.*

RYSDALE.

[*Feeling in his pockets.*] I'm afraid I haven't a nickel. Just wait a moment and——

[*RYSDALE starts L.*

ZOE.

[*Going up.*] Oh, never mind then, I'll wait. Jack, why did your young lady out there give me such a funny look when I asked for you?

RYSDALE.

[*Coming close to her.*] I want to know why she said it was my *wife* wanted to see me.

ZOE.

Did she say that? I can't imagine.

[*They are standing R. of C. door, which is open, but out of range of anyone passing in the hall.*]

RYSDALE.

[*Quickly capturing both her hands.*] It's all I've imagined since I first saw you. I'm not going to stand in line any longer either.

ZOE.

[*Hesitating for a moment.*] Oh, Jack!

[*She yields a little, looks up into his face and he takes her in his arms, as the curtain falls.*]

CURTAIN

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